SITTINGS IN THE MONTH of RAMADĀN

2
BOOKS
IN ONE

A Gift to
THE PEOPLE OF ĪMĀN
in Lessons for the Month of Ramaḍān

BY SHAYKH ṢĀLIḤ AL-FAWZĀN

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ISBN: 978-1-5323-3908-0

First Edition: Rajab 1438 AH / April 2017 CE

Cover Design: Usul Design
Email: info@usuldesign.com

Translators: Raha Batts and Rasheed Barbee

Editing & Formatting: Danielle Lebenson al-Amrikiyyah
www.amrikiyyahdesign.com

Publisher's Information:
Authentic Statements Publishing
P.O. Box 15536
Philadelphia, PA 19131
215.382.3382
215.382.3782 – Fax

Store:
5000 Locust St.(Side Entrance)
Philadelphia, PA 19139

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Transliteration Table

Consonants

ء	'	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	ʿ	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Vowels

Short	ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
Long	ـَا	ā	ـِي	ī	ـُو	ū
Diphthongs	ـَيْ	ay/ai	ـَوْ	aw		

Glyphs

صلى الله عليه وسلم *Ṣallāllāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* (May Allāh's praise & salutations be upon him)

عليه السلام *ʿAlayhis-salām* (Peace be upon him)

رضي الله عنه *Raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* (May Allāh be pleased with him)

رضي الله عنها *Raḍiyallāhu ʿanhā* (May Allāh be pleased with her)

رضي الله عنهم *Raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum* (May Allāh be pleased with them)

رحمه الله *Raḥimahullāh* (May Allāh have mercy on him)

سبحانه وتعالى *Subḥānahu wa-taʿĀlā* (Glorious and Exalted is He)

عز وجل *ʿAzza wa-Jall* (The Mighty and Majestic)

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SITTINGS

IN THE MONTH OF RAMADĀN

INTRODUCTION

By Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān

All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

To proceed:

These are talks that I delivered in the *masjid* during the blessed month of Ramaḍān. One of the brothers, may Allāh grant him *tawfiq*, saw fit to transcribe them from the tapes and print them, so I granted him permission to do so in order for the benefit to spread, if Allāh wills. Although it is a humble effort, he who is not generous with a small amount will not be generous with a large amount. I ask Allāh to bring benefit by way of it and to reward with the best reward the one who exerted efforts in publishing it.

May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE FIRST SITTING

Happiness Due to the Coming of the Month of Ramaḍān

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists. May abundant prayers and peace be upon His servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and Companions.

We praise Allāh ﷻ for favoring us by allowing us to reach this month. We ask Him ﷻ to aid us and you in performing righteous deeds and to allow us and you to complete it with righteous actions. The Muslim is perpetually upon goodness, especially if Allāh favors him with encountering the month of Ramaḍān and other than it from the seasons of worship and grants him success in taking advantage of it and completing it with what has been legislated for it. This is in opposition to the deprived people, whose lives are a curse for them. Days and months of goodness pass upon them while they are heedless, turning away.

So the person either utilizes his time in good, so the benefit comes back to him, or he utilizes his time in evil, so the harm comes back to him. As the Prophet ﷺ said:

كل الناس يغدو فبائع نفسه فمعتقها أو موبقها.

Everyone begins his day as a vendor of his soul, either freeing it or bringing about its ruin.[1]

The person (himself) is the one who cultivates his soul and presides over it. If he takes care of it in goodness and he purifies it by way of obedience, utilizing time for that which benefits it, then he has done well in caretaking—the caretaking of his soul, firstly, then the caretaking of others. However, if he squanders his soul, then he will never take care of others. If he leaves his soul to whatever it wills from sins and laziness, then he will lose his soul; and if the person loses his soul, then what would he thus preserve if he couldn't preserve himself? His soul is the most valuable thing he has. Due to this, Allāh the Glorified said:

﴿ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨) قَدْ
أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا (٩) ﴾

And by the soul and He Who perfected him in proportion; indeed, he succeeds who purifies his own self.

[Sūrah ash-Shams 91:7-9]

"Purifies it," meaning: He purifies it from sins and disobedience and perfects it by way of acts of obedience and good deeds. This is the one who purifies his soul.

---

[1] On the authority of Abū Mālik al-Ash'ari, who said that Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said:

الطهور شطر الإيمان والحمد لله تملأ الميزان وسبحان الله والحمد لله تملآن أو تملأ ما بين السماوات والأرض والصلاة نور والصدقة برهان والصبر ضياء والقرآن حجة لك أو عليك كل الناس يغدو فبائع نفسه فمعتقها أو موبقها.

Purity is half of *īmān*. *Al-ḥamdulillāh* (all praise is for Allāh) fills the scales. *SubḥānAllāh* (Glorified be Allāh) and *al-ḥamdulillāh* fill that which is between the heavens and the earth. Prayer is a light. Charity is an evidence. Patience is a radiant light. The Qur'ān is an argument, either for you or against you. Everyone begins his day as a vendor of his soul, either freeing it or bringing about its ruin.

Reported by Muslim (223).

﴿ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا ﴾

And indeed, he fails who corrupts his own self.

[Sūrah ash-Shams 91:10]

Meaning: He corrupts it by way of sins, iniquities, and disobedience; he neglects it and leaves it to do what it pleases. Due to this, Allāh says:

﴿ يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنسَانُ مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَن
يَرَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

The Day when man shall remember what he strove for, and Hellfire shall be made apparent in full view for (every) one who sees.

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:35-36]

He said: "And Hellfire shall be made apparent," meaning: it will appear. "...In full view for (every) one who sees," meaning: he will see it with his eyes. In this worldly life, we cannot see the Fire. He has not seen the Hellfire that Allāh has mentioned. It is from the world of the unseen. We believe in it and we do actions that will help us avoid it, while we do not see it. However, in the Hereafter, the person will see it with his eyes, right before his face. "And Hellfire shall be made apparent"; after it had been from the realm of the unseen and was hidden, it will be made apparent and appear before the people.

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿٣٨﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ
هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ ﴾

Then, for him who transgressed all bounds, and preferred the life of this world, verily, his abode will be Hellfire.

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:37-39]

What an evil abode; I seek refuge with Allāh. His abode is the Fire, and he will have no other abode besides it. We ask Allāh for security.

﴿ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ ﴾

But as for him who feared standing before his Lord...

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:40]

He was afraid of standing before his Lord for the reckoning. Every servant shall meet Him and stand before Him, and Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ will call him to account. "But as for him who feared standing before his Lord," meaning: he feared it in the worldly life and thus did actions and prepared for the meeting with Allāh.

﴿ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۝٤٠ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ
الْمَأْوَىٰ ۝٤١ ﴾

...and restrained himself from impure evil desires,
and lusts, verily, Paradise will be his abode.

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:40-41]

It will be his permanent residence; Paradise, the expanse of which is that of the heavens and the earth. As for the Fire—and refuge is sought with Allāh—it is tight, miserable, severe, evil, and painful.

"Paradise will be his abode," meaning: it will be his permanent residence and he will not desire to leave. It will be his abode forever. So what is the difference between he whose abode is the Fire and he whose abode is Paradise? It is a tremendous difference that the mind cannot fathom.

This is the categorization of the people on the Day of Judgment: a party in Paradise and a party in the blazing Fire. The reason is the actions of the person in this worldly life, either good or bad. Allāh (the Majestic and High) has made time for His believing slaves in which they can draw near to Him by way of acts of obedience and performing what Allāh has made obligatory upon them. So they will be successful in attaining the pleasure of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ and they will enter His Paradise on the Day of Judgment.

As for if they are negligent regarding what their Lord has commanded them with and they follow their desires and squander the obligations of Allāh, committing what Allāh has made impermissible, then Allāh has prepared for them:

﴿ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ
شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴾

A Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the commands they receive from Allāh, but do that which they are commanded.

[Sūrah at-Taḥrīm 66:6]

You, O Muslim, are in this month, and the doors have been opened for you and the paths to Paradise have been made smooth for you in this month. As the Prophet ﷺ has informed us, the doors of the Fire are closed in this month and the doors of Paradise are opened for the believers.[2] The doors of the Hellfire are closed off from the believers during this month and they devote themselves to the obedience of Allāh, and the doors of Paradise are opened.

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[2] On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, who said that the Messenger of Allāh said:

إذا جاء رمضان فتحت أبواب الجنة وغلقت أبواب النار وصفدت الشياطين.

When Ramaḍān comes, the doors of Paradise are opened and the doors of the Hellfire are closed, and the devils are chained.

Reported by al-Bukhāri (3277) and Muslim (1079).

In another narration:

فتحت أبواب الرحمة.

...the doors of mercy are opened.

Reported by Muslim (2/1079).

In another narration:

فتحت أبواب السماء.

As for the people of misery, the doors of the Fire are perpetually opened for them because they do not acknowledge this month nor do they acknowledge other than it. Their only concern is their bellies, their desires, and that which will increase their portions in this fleeting *dunyā*. These people do not value this month or other than it. All their days and months are only a means of loss for them while they enjoy (the faculties of) intellect, hearing, and sight, and the path has been made clear for them. However, they are blinded from it, so their hearts do not benefit from it nor do their ears or eyes. Due to this, they will say on the Day of Judgment:

﴿ لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴾

"Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire!"

[Sūrah al-Mulk 67:10]

Meaning: Had we listened with the listening of acceptance and used our minds to understand; for they have minds and hearing. However, they (their minds and hearing) did not benefit them; thus, it was as if they did not have them.

"Had we but listened," with a listening that benefited us, "… or used our intelligence," with intelligence that benefited us, "… we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire!" This is because none are the dwellers of the blazing Fire except the deaf, dumb, and blind who have no good in them. We ask Allāh for security.

In summary: This is a tremendous opportunity in your life, O Muslim, so take advantage of it. Ask Allāh to assist you upon righteous actions during it, and ask Allāh for acceptance (of those

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…the doors of the heavens are opened.

Reported by al-Bukhāri (1899).

actions) and increase in His bounty. Indeed, he who catches the month of Ramaḍān and for whom Allāh makes it possible to benefit from it, Allāh has bestowed upon him a tremendous favor to which nothing is equivalent. By Allāh, those who have millions and own buildings and property do not have the equivalent of it. By Allāh, nothing is equivalent to this month for the one to whom Allāh ﷻ grants success, even if he doesn't own anything from the *dunyā* or have any money. If Allāh favors him with this month, then he will profit, and he is a true merchant; he is truly wealthy. The wealthy one is not the person who owns this *dunyā*, for if he loses the Hereafter, then he is poor, because he will lose this life and the Hereafter. The *dunyā* does not belong to anyone. The *dunyā* is fleeting and passes quickly. It is like the path upon which all the people pass and they leave it for others.

We ask Allāh عز وجل to grant us and you success in taking advantage of our time and hastening towards acts of obedience and repentance from sins and iniquities. And may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

THE SECOND SITTING

Taking Advantage of Time Throughout the Month by Way of Righteous Deeds

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh.

To proceed:

Indeed, the virtues of the month of Ramaḍān are many and numerous. Every person takes from these virtues what Allāh grants him *tawfiq* to acquire. From them, there is he who completes it. This was the state of the pious predecessors, for they used to rejoice with the month of Ramaḍān, while all year round they were earnest and diligent, standing at night and fasting throughout the day. They were engaged in striving in the path of Allāh, seeking knowledge, and performing righteous actions. However, they would rejoice at this month due to what they would perform therein from additional good, and they loved the good and everything that drew them closer to good. The pious predecessors honored this month and would single it out with various types of striving, and they busied themselves with this month. They would supplicate to Allāh to allow them to reach it, then they would supplicate to Him to accept from them (their deeds).

He whose condition was less than theirs would benefit from this month in proportion to what Allāh has favored him with. If one does not corrupt it with evil deeds and heedlessness, then the month of Ramaḍān contains tremendous virtues. The greatest virtue of the month of Ramaḍān is that Allāh specified it for fasting, which is a pillar from the pillars of Islām. So He has made the performance of this great pillar to be in this month. This is sufficient as an honor and virtue for this month—that Allāh has specified it for the performance of a pillar from the pillars of Islām in it, i.e., fasting.

From its virtues is that which Allāh has praised it for, and that is the revelation of the Noble Qur'ān therein. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ ﴾

The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān...

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

This is a tremendous virtue, for this time was specified for the revelation of the greatest book from the books of Allāh, i.e., the magnificent Qur'ān. Based on this, recitation of the Qur'ān in this month is distinguished from its recitation in other months, although the Muslim is required to recite the Qur'ān in all months and days. However, its recitation in this month is a virtue and it is distinguished. This is because it is the month of the revelation of the Qur'ān and it is the time in which Jibrīl ﷷ would review the Qur'ān with the Prophet ﷺ.[1] The Prophet ﷺ would review the Qur'ān with Jibrīl from beginning to end. Hence, the recitation of the Qur'ān in this month has tremendous virtues. All year round, the recitation of the Qur'ān is such that each letter is a good deed, and the good deed is multiplied tenfold. These good deeds are increased during the month of Ramaḍān.

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[1] On the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, who said, "The Messenger ﷺ was the most generous of the people. He was even more generous during Ramaḍān, in which Jibrīl would come to him every night of Ramaḍān and review the Qur'ān within him. So the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was more generous with goodness than a blowing wind." Reported by al-Bukhāri (6) and Muslim (2308).

From the virtues of this month is that there is a night in it that is better than a thousand months. A thousand months, when counted in years, is more than 80 years. This night is better than 80 years and some months, all spent in the obedience of Allāh. This is a great virtue. He who spends 80 years in the obedience of Allāh and the one who has been favored by Allāh to catch this night so that he spends it standing due to faith and anticipation of the reward (are equal), for Allāh will write for him, due to standing on this night, the actions of a thousand months. This is a favor that Allāh gives to whom He wills. This night is in the month of Ramaḍān, as Allāh سبحانه وتعالى said:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴾

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down on the Night of Qadr (decree).

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:1]

And He said:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ ﴾

The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān...

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

The Qur'ān was revealed on the Night of Decree, in the month of Ramaḍān. The meaning of the Qur'ān being sent down therein is that Allāh began the revelation of the Qur'ān on this night in the month of Ramaḍān. Then the revelation continued to come to the Prophet ﷺ, because the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ from the time Allāh dispatched him in Makkah until Allāh brought about his death in Madīnah, over a period of 23 years. The Qur'ān was revealed to him piecemeal. Some (whole) chapters were revealed to him, and (some) verses were revealed (at other times) until the Qur'ān was completed when he died ﷺ. So the meaning of: "…in which was revealed the Qur'ān," and: "Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down on the Night of Qadr," is that He began the commencement of its revelation and the subsequent continual revelation thereafter (in Ramaḍān). It was revealed to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ until the end of his life.

These are tremendous distinctions for this month:

- A pillar from the pillars of Islām is performed in it (fasting).
- Allāh revealed the Qur'ān in it.
- It contains a night that is better than a thousand months.

- From the virtues of this month is that the deeds are multiplied abundantly therein, more so than they are in other months, due to the nobility of what Allāh has placed in it.

- From its virtues is that Allāh has specified it with the Tarāwīḥ prayer, which is prayed in the mosques in congregation. This is only in the month of Ramaḍān. This indicates its virtue and great status with Allāh ﷻ.

- From its virtues is that within it, the doors of Paradise are opened in order to accept the righteous deeds and the doers of these deeds. Likewise, the doors of the Fire are closed, for sins are minimized in the month of Ramaḍān and the Muslims devote themselves to obedience and racing towards Paradise.

- From its virtues is that the devils are chained and locked away from the believers. So Allāh ﷻ restrains the devils from the believers during this month, so they cannot corrupt their worship. Due to this, you find the people devoting themselves to obedience in this month; even those who are lazy throughout the year, you find them devoting themselves to the obedience of Allāh in Ramaḍān. This is something clear. Why is this? This is because the devils are locked away from the people of *īmān*. As for the people of disbelief and hypocrisy, the devils have mastery over them in the month of Ramaḍān and other than it. The devils are only chained away from the believers, specifically in the month of Ramaḍān. This is so they can adhere to the obedience of Allāh. As for the hypocrites and the disbelievers, they are as Allāh ﷻ has said:

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزًّا ﴾

See you not that We have sent the devils against the disbelievers to push them to do evil.

[Sūrah Maryam 19:83]

They push them to evil—and refuge is sought with Allāh—in Ramaḍān and in other months. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُم
بِهِ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ ﴾

Verily! He has no power over those who believe and put their trust only in their Lord (Allāh). His power is only over those who obey and follow him (the Shayṭān), and those who join partners with Him (Allāh).

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:99-100]

The authority of the Shayṭān is over the disbelievers. The *awliyā'* of the Shayṭān are every disbeliever, deviant, heretic, hypocrite, and despicable person. As for the believers, the Shayṭān has no authority over them, and for Allāh is all praise. If they repent, then Allāh will accept their repentance, forgive their sins, and wipe away their misdeeds. He will forgive whatever emanated from them and multiply the reward for them. This is from that which angers the Shayṭān, that he is unable to prevent Allāh's bounty which He sends down upon His believing slaves. He is extremely angry and hurt due to this. However, this is from the bounty of Allāh upon the believers.

This month is a blessed and tremendous month, as the Prophet ﷺ has described it in what is narrated from him, from the fact that Allāh has made fasting during its day to be an obligation and has made standing during its night to be supererogatory, and He has made the supererogatory actions of the person within it to be a characteristic from the characteristics of good, similar to the one who performs an obligatory action. And he who performs an obligatory action is like the one who performs 70 obligatory actions in other months. This is a tremendous bounty and a glad tiding to the believers.

We ask Allāh ﷿ to provide us and you with the good of this month and its blessings, and to make us from those who benefit from its virtues and the rewards it contains, and to not deprive us nor you of His bounty, and to not deprive us nor you of righteous actions in this month or other than it. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

THE THIRD SITTING

Clarifying the Virtues of Fasting

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh.

To proceed:

Fasting is from the most virtuous actions. This is because the person prefers the pleasure of Allāh over the desires of his soul, so he deprives himself of food, drink, and that which it desires. Perhaps he is in dire need of it, such as the one who is thirsty and has a dire need for water, and the one who is hungry and has a dire need for food. In spite of this, he leaves his food, drink, and the desires of his soul while having the ability to partake in what is before him. Yet he leaves it out of obedience to Allāh ﷾ and he draws near to his Lord by way of abandoning what he desires and is inclined to. Due to this, fasting is the most beloved act to Allāh ﷾. In the Ḥadīth Qudsi, Allāh (the Majestic and High) says:

الصوم لي وأنا أجزي به إنه ترك شهوته وطعامه وشرابه من أجلي ولخلوف فم الصائم أطيب عند الله من ريح المسك.

Fasting is for Me and I will give the reward for it. He has left the fulfillment of his desires, his food, and his drink for My sake. Indeed, the smell of the fasting person's mouth is sweeter with Allāh than musk.[1]

The *khalūf* of the mouth is the smell that is in his mouth during the day due to his stomach being devoid of food, so fumes that have a smell the people dislike arise. However, this smell is beloved to Allāh and it is sweeter to Him than the aroma of musk. This is because it emanates from obedience to Him and it is an effect of his worship, so Allāh loves it. It is sweet to Him, even though the people consider it a repugnant smell. This is from that which proves the virtue of fasting. Due to this, Allāh تعالى has made it obligatory upon this *ummah*. Allāh has said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾

O you who believe! Observing *aṣ-ṣawm* (fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may have *taqwā*.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:183]

The meaning of كُتِبَ (lit. "written") is "prescribed." So Allāh has prescribed fasting for this *ummah* and made it one of the pillars of Islām. The Prophet ﷺ has encouraged supererogatory fasting in addition to the obligatory fast because fasting is beloved to Allāh ﷻ. Therefore, He loves that His slaves do it in abundance. However, He ﷻ—due to His mercy for His slaves and lightening the affair for them—has only obligated upon them one month of fasting. The remaining 11 months of the year, they may leave off fasting if they wish, and if they wish for an increased reward, they may fast from them what is easy for them. He gave them the choice during the rest of the year to either fast or not. However, for them to fast is more beloved to Him ﷻ, according to what the Messenger ﷺ has clarified from fasting the days which he has set, such as fasting on Mondays and Thursdays,[2] fasting three days of every month,[3] and fasting 10 days of Dhul-Ḥijjah:[4] fasting the day of ʻArafah, fasting the day of 'Āshūrā',[5] as well as fasting the day before it or after it.

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[1] On the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ az-Zayāt who said that he heard Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه say that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

قال الله عز وجل: كل عمل ابن آدم له إلا الصيام؛ فإنه لي وأنا أجزي به، والصيام جنّة، وإذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم فلا يرفث، ولا يصخب، فإن سابّه أحد أو قاتله فليقل: إني امرؤ صائم، والذي نفس محمد بيده لخلوف فم الصائم أطيب عند الله من ريح المسك، للصائم فرحتان يفرحهما: إذا أفطر فرح، وإذا لقي ربه فرح بصومه.

Allāh عز وجل said, "All of the actions of the son of Ādam are for him except fasting. It is for Me and I shall give the reward for it. Fasting is a shield. So when it is the fasting day of one of you, let him not behave insolently or ignorantly. If someone abuses him or seeks to fight with him, let him say, 'I am fasting.' By He in Whose Hand is the soul of Muḥammad, the smell from the fasting person's mouth is sweeter with Allāh than the aroma of musk."

Reported by al-Bukhāri (1904) and Muslim (1151).

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[2] On the authority of the servant of Usāmah bin Zayd who said that he went out with Usāmah to the valley of al-Qurā seeking some money of his, and he would fast on Mondays and Thursdays. His servant said to him, "Why do you fast on Mondays and Thursdays, while you are an elderly man?" He said, "Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ used to fast on Mondays and Thursdays, and he was asked about that. He said:

إن أعمال العباد تعرض يوم الإثنين ويوم الخميس.

" 'The actions of the servants are presented on Mondays and Thursdays.' "

Reported by Abū Dāwūd (2436) and an-Nasā'i (2360), and al-Albāni graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (1570).

On the authority of ʻĀ'ishah ﵂ who said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ strove to fast on Mondays and Thursdays." Reported by at-Tirmidhi (745), an-Nasā'i (2188), and Ibn Mājah (1739). At-Tirmidhi said, "The *ḥadīth* of ʻĀ'ishah is a *ḥadīth* that is *ḥasan gharīb*." Al-Albāni graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (4897).

[3] On the authority of Abū Hurayrah ﵁ who said, "My friend advised me with three things that I will not leave off until I die: fasting three days of every month, [praying] the Ḍuḥā prayer, and sleeping after performing Witr." Reported by al-Bukhāri (1078 and 1981) and Muslim (721).

On the authority of Abū Dharr who said, "Allāh's Messenger ﷺ commanded us to fast the white days: the 13th, 14th, and 15th of every month." Reported by at-Tirmidhi (761), an-Nasā'i (2420 and 2421), and al-Baghawi in *Sharḥ as-Sunnah* (1800), as well as Ibn Khuzaymah in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (2127 and 2128). At-Tirmidhi said, "The *ḥadīth* of Abū Dharr is *ḥasan*."

[4] On the authority of some of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ who said that he used to fast the first nine days of Dhul-Ḥijjah, the day of ʻĀshūrā', three days of every month, or Mondays and Thursdays. In another wording: "...two Thursdays of every month." Reported by Abū Dāwūd (2437), an-Nasā'i (2415), and Aḥmad (2/288).

He who increases upon that is not to fast the entirety of the year, for Allāh detests that his slaves should fast for the entirety of the year due to what this contains from difficulty upon them. Rather, they are to fast at times and not fast at other times. The Prophet would fast at times and not fast at other times throughout the year. He would fast to the point that it would be said, "He will never stop fasting." And at other times, he would go without fasting to the point that it would be said, "He will never fast again." Meaning, he would fast abundantly at times, and at other times, he would leave off fasting for long periods. Thus was the year of the Prophet ﷺ.[6]

In summary, fasting is beloved by Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. Due to this, it is obligatory upon the fasting person to rectify his intention within his fast, making it purely for Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. He must intend to draw near to Allāh and he must be patient with what he encounters from difficulty in his fast, because this is in obedience to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. Therefore, it is upon him to purify his intention and be patient. Moreover, fasting is not merely abandoning food, drink, and what one desires to eat or drink. In addition to that, one must refrain from everything that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ has prohibited. So he must safeguard his hearing from listening to what is impermissible, such as backbiting, tale-carrying, and listening to musical instruments and singing. These are impermissible all year round. However, its prohibition is greater for the fasting person because it affects his fast.

Likewise, he is to safeguard his tongue from impermissible speech, such as backbiting, tale-carrying, abuse, cursing, and every false statement. Even though these things are impermissible year-round, the prohibition is greater and the sin is more heinous while one is fasting. This is because it damages one's fast.

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[5] On the authority of Abū Qatādah al-Anṣāri who said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was asked about fasting on the day of 'Arafah and he said, 'It expiates the sins of the previous year and the year to come.' And he was asked about fasting on the day of 'Āshūrā' and he said, 'It expiates the sins of the previous year.'" Reported by Muslim (1162).

[6] On the authority of 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا who said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would fast so much that we would say, 'He will never leave off fasting.' And he would leave off fasting to the point that we would say, 'He will never fast.' And I have never seen the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ fasting an entire month except in Ramaḍān. And I have never seen him fasting (supererogatory fasts) in any month more than he would fast in Sha'bān." Reported by al-Bukhāri (1969) and Muslim (1154).

Likewise, one must safeguard his vision from looking at what Allāh has prohibited, such as looking at women or women looking at men or looking at enticing images and inappropriate shows by way of videos and the television. So he safeguards his vision from looking at these things at all times. However, while he is fasting, these things are more heinous, for they corrupt his fast.

Perhaps the fasting person will fast and his hunger, thirst, and fatigue will be intense, but he has no reward with Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ because his tongue gained mastery over him by way of impermissible speech, and his vision gained mastery over him by way of looking at what is impermissible, and his ears gained mastery over him by way of listening to what is impermissible. Therefore, in reality, he has not fasted. He has only abandoned food and drink. Therefore, he has worn himself out to no avail. Hence, fasting comprises all of these things: fasting of the stomach from food, drink, and the rest of that which nullifies the fast, as well as the fasting of the hearing from every impermissible speech and the fasting of the vision from everything that Allāh has made impermissible to look at, and the fasting of the tongue from speaking with lewdness and sin. Therefore, one's entire body fasts. Also, one's hands and feet fast from walking towards what Allāh has prohibited and striking what Allāh has prohibited.

Therefore, fasting is a tremendous act of worship. When the person embarks upon it, he is to avoid everything that is not appropriate while he is fasting, just like the one who assumes *iḥrām* for Ḥajj and 'Umrah. When he enters into the state of *iḥrām,* certain things that were permissible for him before *iḥrām* now become impermissible. And there are certain things that are impermissible whether he is in *iḥrām* or not. The case for the fasting person is similar, for there are things that are impermissible for him only while he is fasting, such as eating, drinking, and that which Allāh has made permissible for him while he is not fasting. There are other things that are always impermissible for him, but their prohibition is greater while he is fasting. It is obligatory for the fasting person to safeguard his fast from everything that will harm it, to the point that if someone transgresses against him by way of speech, then he should not respond to him. Rather, he is to say, "I am fasting." The Prophet ﷺ said, "If someone abuses him or reviles him, then let him say: 'I am fasting, I am fasting.'"

Therefore, he is not to respond to one who speaks about him. Rather, he says, "I am fasting." And if it is the case that he is not to respond to one who transgresses against him, then how about him transgressing against others?!

In summary: Fasting is a tremendous act of worship that one must safeguard and respect. The time in which one is fasting should be similar to the time in which he is not. While he is not fasting, he must also have fear and reverence of Allāh and avoid what Allāh has made impermissible. And while he is fasting, this must be more so the case; otherwise, his fast merely wears him out and brings no benefit.

We ask Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ to give us all success in what he loves and is pleased with. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

THE FOURTH SITTING

Preservation of the Fast from Things that Affect It

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

To proceed:

Indeed, fasting accustoms the Muslim to having good character and makes easy upon him the performance of acts of obedience and the avoidance of affairs that are prohibited and deemed distasteful. It accustoms him to being kind to those who are in need and to softening his heart for the remembrance of Allāh. The benefits of fasting are tremendous and they are many. They are benefits which are apparent and known by mankind, for it can be seen of a fasting person that he has fear and reverence of Allāh, as well as subjugation of his soul and seeking nearness to Allāh by way of good deeds, the likes of which are not seen upon those who do not fast.

However, it is proper that it be known that fasting does not have these benefits and these praiseworthy characteristics unless the person protects it from what will damage it. Indeed, it is similar to clothing: if one protects his clothing, then it shall be a safeguard for him, a covering for him, and protection from heat and cold, and the clothing will be warm upon his body and a means of beautification for him. If he does not safeguard it, then it is subject to being torn and ripped apart and it is subject to becoming dirty. Therefore, the clothing will be of no benefit. The clothing will be torn, tattered, and filthy. And it will not be a means of beautification for the one who wears it nor will it protect him from heat or cold, nor will it cover his private area. The affair of fasting is similar—if one does not safeguard his fast, then it will become torn and filthy, in which case it will not benefit the one who does so except by bringing him fatigue, hunger, and thirst. Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ said:

رب صائم حظه من صيامه الجوع والعطش، ورب قائم حظه من قيامه السهر.

Perhaps the fasting person has no portion of his fast except hunger and thirst. Perhaps the one who stands has no portion of standing except sleeplessness.[1]

Why is this? This is because he did not safeguard his fast from what was obligatory for him to safeguard it from. Therefore, the fasting person who allows his tongue to run loose in impermissible speech—such as backbiting, tale-carrying, cursing, revilement, and every despicable statement—has torn and tattered his fast by way of his tongue. So, the tongue does not fast unless one restrains it from every impermissible statement and utilizes it in the remembrance of Allāh, recitation of the Qur'ān, glorification of Allāh, declaring Allāh's oneness, and in doing righteous actions. This is what is appropriate for the one who is fasting, as well as the one who is not fasting. However, is it more emphasized for the one who is fasting.

Likewise, the fasting person who allows his vision to roam freely in that which is impermissible, so he does not lower his gaze from looking at what is impermissible; he goes into the marketplaces and to the gathering places of women and places of *fitnah*, gaining impermissible pleasure by looking at what is *ḥarām*. Therefore, he looks at women and at things that are inappropriate, or he sits in his home, opening the television screen or looking at videos that come from Europe or America and everywhere in the world and are broadcasted containing shameful and despicable images of lewdness. So he sits and looks at this screen while he is fasting; this person has no fast. There does not remain anything for him except hunger and thirst, and his fast will not benefit him with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

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[1] Reported by al-Ḥākim in *Al-Mustadrak* (1/431), Aḥmad in *Al-Musnad* (2/373), al-Bayhaqi in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā* (4/270), and aṭ-Ṭabarāni in *Majma' al-Kabīr* (12/382 13413). Al-Ḥākim said, "This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the condition of al-Bukhāri, although they did not record it." Al-Haythami said in *Majma' az-Zawā'id* (3/202), "The narrators are trustworthy." Al-Albāni graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jami'* (3488).

Likewise, the fasting person whose hearing does not fast from listening to what Allāh has made impermissible, so he listens to music, singing, false speech, cursing, revilement, backbiting, and tale-carrying. He has not fasted a fast that will benefit him with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. He has only fasted a fast that does not contain any benefit. He is not commanded to repeat it because the outward condition is that he has fasted; however, he has no reward with Allāh عز وجل, and this fast is torn and tattered; it does not cover his private areas nor does it beautify his appearance. It will not warm him from the cold nor will it protect him from the heat. It is a fast that contains no benefit.

Therefore, it is obligatory upon the fasting person to bear these affairs in mind and to safeguard his fast so that if his stomach fasts from food and drink and his private parts fast from intercourse, he lets his tongue fast as well from impermissible speech and lets his vision fast from looking at what is impermissible, and lets his hearing fast from listening to what is impermissible; let him fast with the entirety of his body and all of his limbs from everything that Allāh has made impermissible.

Two things are impermissible for the fasting person: There is that which is only impermissible while fasting and it is permissible at other times, such as eating, drinking, and engaging in that which Allāh has made permissible. This is impermissible only during the time wherein he is fasting. And other things are impermissible outright; however, the impermissibility is increased in regard to the fasting person. And this is the remaining acts of disobedience and impermissible affairs. While they are impermissible for the fasting person as well as the one who is not fasting, the prohibition is more severe for the fasting person because—despite the fact that they are impermissible and sinful—they also have an effect on his fast and they render his reward with Allāh invalid. And in addition to their impermissibility and the sin that lies within them, they are continuously impermissible throughout the entire year. Therefore, it is upon the fasting person to bear these affairs in mind. The Prophet ﷺ has directed [us] towards restraining one's tongue from what is impermissible to the point that if someone were to speak against him, abuse him, and curse him, he is not to respond. The Prophet ﷺ said:

فإن سابه أحد فليقل: إني صائم، إني صائم.

If someone abuses him or reviles him, then say: "I am fasting. I am fasting."

It is said that the meaning of this is that he says, "I am fasting," in order to inform the one who is arguing with him that he is fasting. So, this means: "Were it not for the fact that I am fasting, I would've responded to you." It is also said that he says this statement in his heart in order to remind himself that he is fasting. Thus, he will restrain his tongue from responding to the one who has abused and reviled him. Although responding with the likes of that is permissible, from the perspective of equality, the fasting person is prevented from that. This is because it will have an effect on his fast.

And if this is the case of one who is being reviled and abused—that he is not to respond to the one who reviles and abuses him—then how about the one who initiates the reviling of the people and transgresses against them by way of abuse, revilement, backbiting, and tale-carrying? This indicates that it is obligatory to safeguard the tongue. The tongue, in reality, has many dangers for the individual while he is fasting and while he is not. The Prophet ﷺ said:

وهل يكب الناس في النار على وجوههم أو على مناخرهم - إلا حصائد ألسنتهم؟

Will the people be dragged upon their faces in the Hellfire or upon their noses except due to the harvest of their tongues?[2]

Speech is easy, so the person speaks and gains pleasure from talking. However, the result of it is deadly and the punishment for it is painful, and refuge is sought with Allāh. Due to this, the Shayṭān beautifies speech for people, despite the fact that it cuts their throats and their veins and thus destroys them and causes them to be dragged upon their faces or their noses in the Hellfire. Due to this, a poet said:

Safeguard your tongue, O man, and do not let it sting
you, for indeed it is a snake,

How many are those in the graves killed by way of his
tongue due to having met one who was courageous.

Another poet said:

The youth dies due to the movement of his tongue and
a person does not die due to the follies of the foot,

For the follies of speech cause the brain to depart and
the follies of the foot remove trouble from him.

We ask Allāh to give all of us success in performing and making righteous statements. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

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[2] Reported by Aḥmad (5/233 and 237) as well as at-Tirmidhi (2616), Ibn Mājah (3973), and 'Abdullāh bin Ḥumayd in *Al-Muntakhab* (212). Al-Albāni graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (5136).

THE FIFTH SITTING

The Virtue of Spending in Ramaḍān

In the name of Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy. All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon Allāh's Messenger.

To proceed:

Indeed, spending from good wealth and lawful earnings in the path of Allāh is from the noblest acts of worship, for just as worship is performed by way of the body, it is also performed by way of wealth. Due to this, Allāh ﷻ has made *zakāh*—which is the spending of a portion of one's wealth—one of the pillars of Islām; and it is a known right for those who ask and those who are indigent. Therefore, Allāh has made a type of charity—which is *zakāh*—to be one of the pillars of Islām. He has likewise obligated types of charitable acts as an expiation, such as the expiation for the lack of fulfillment of an oath, the expiation for *aẓ-ẓihār* (when a man says that his wife is impermissible for him), and the expiation of killing game while within the holy sanctuary (Makkah) or while in a state of *iḥrām*. Allāh has made some expiations obligatory by way of spending wealth. That which is besides this is optional, and it is from the best forms of optional worship.

Spending lawful wealth in obedience to Allāh is also *jihād*, which is from the noblest of actions. In verses from the Qur'ān, *jihād* in the path of Allāh with one's wealth takes precedence over *jihād* with one's person, due to what it contains from benefit for others. Therefore, it is befitting for the Muslim to know this so he may perform what Allāh has made obligatory upon him with his wealth from established rights and so he may give charity and increase upon that in optional charity and thus not deprive himself (of reward), especially in this blessed month and the seasons of good. And one should not belittle charity even with a small amount, for indeed Allāh ﷻ will save a person from the Hellfire by way of half a date. The Prophet ﷺ said:

فاتقوا النار ولو بشق تمرة، فمن لم يجد فبكلمة طيبة.

Protect yourself from the Fire even with half a date stone. And he who does not have this, then with a good statement.[1]

Allāh (the Majestic and High) accepts charity from his believing slave and He nurtures it just as one of you nurtures a foal until it (the charity) becomes like a large mountain.[2] Therefore, no one should belittle an act of charity even if it is with a small amount; so how about if it is a large amount? Mosques are built from good wealth; schools are built and good is spread; *jihād* is established in the path of Allāh. So that which can be done with wealth is vast and its good is abundant for those who have it, if they spend it in the obedience of Allāh.

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[1] Reported by al-Bukhāri (1413 and 3590) and Muslim (1016).

[2] On the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ, who said that Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said:

من تصدق بعدل تمرة من كسب طيب - ولا يقبل الله إلا الطيب - فإن الله يتقبلها بيمينه ثم يربيها لصاحبها كما يربي أحدكم فلوه حتى تكون مثل الجبل.

He who gives charity equivalent to a date from pure earnings—and Allāh only accepts that which is pure—Allāh will accept it with his right hand and cultivate it for the one who gave it just as one of you cultivates a foal until it (the charity) becomes like a mountain.

Reported by al-Bukhāri (1410) and Muslim (1014).

﴿ مَّثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ
حَبَّةٍ أَنبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِّائَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
يُضَاعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh, is as the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allāh gives manifold increase to whom He pleases. And Allāh is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:261]

If the charity is given to a relative who is in need, then it is better than charity given to someone else, because charity given to a relative who is in need is charity as well as joining the ties of the womb.[3] Therefore, it contains two rewards: the reward of charity and the reward of joining the ties of the womb.

Spending in the path of Allāh comprises a person spending upon himself, his wife and children, and the people of his household, and he shall have a tremendous reward for doing so. Therefore, if the spending is from lawful earnings and with good intentions, its reward is tremendous and its good is abundant. Therefore, love of wealth, greed, or stinginess should not overtake a person and cause him to deprive himself of the (good of) this wealth. It sits in his hand, and Allāh has given him the opportunity to give charity with it and to send forth good for himself. If he withholds the charity with this wealth, gathering it and hoarding it, then it will depart and leave him and his benefit will go to others while he was the one who wore himself out earning it. So how could he deprive himself? Why did he gather this wealth knowing that he is upon a journey and this wealth will not benefit him unless he sends it forth for himself before death as ongoing charity which will continue after he passes away? The Prophet ﷺ said:

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[3] On the authority of Salmān bin 'Āmir aḍ-Ḍabi who said that Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said:

الصدقة على المسكين صدقة، وعلى ذي القرابة اثنان: صدقة وصلة.

Charity given to one who is poor is charity. And charity given to a near relative is two things: charity and joining the ties of the womb.

Reported by at-Tirmidhi (658), Ibn Mājah (1844), Ibn Khuzaymah (2067), Aḥmad (4/17-18), and ad-Dārimi (1687 and 1688). Al-Albāni graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (3858).

إذا مات ابن آدم انقطع عمله إلا من ثلاث: من صدقة جارية، أو علم ينتفع به، أو ولد صالح يدعو له.

When the son of Ādam dies, his deeds are cut off except three: ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who supplicates for him.[4]

Moreover, the Muslim should know that Allāh is pure and only accepts what is pure. Therefore, he is not to give charity with *ḥarām* wealth or from evil earnings, for indeed, this will not be accepted by Allāh. Likewise, the person should not give charity from lowly wealth which contains little benefit. Allāh has said:

﴿ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُم بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَن تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ ﴾

And do not aim at what is bad to spend from it, (though) you would not accept it save if you close your eyes and tolerate therein.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:267]

What is intended by "what is bad" in this verse is that which is lowly and not that which is impermissible. Therefore, if a person does not like a particular food due to its lowly nature, he is not to give it away in charity, for Allāh has prohibited this: "And do not aim at what is bad to spend from it." (For example), [if] one does not give a garment in charity unless he sees that it is torn or tattered and not fit for wearing or that it will not last long. Or [if] one does not give food in charity except that which he himself does not desire. This is not charity; it is only freeing oneself of something (that he does not desire). And this will not benefit at all with Allāh. Allāh says:

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[4] Reported by Muslim (1631).

﴿ لَن تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ﴾

By no means shall you attain *al-birr* (piety, righteousness, etc., it means here Allāh's reward, i.e., Paradise), unless you spend (in Allāh's cause) of that which you love.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:92]

And Allāh also said:

﴿ وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴾

And they give food, despite their love for it (or for the love of Him), to *miskīn* (the poor), the orphan, and the captive.

[Sūrah al-Insān 76:8]

They feed them that which they themselves desire and love. However, one must give precedence to what Allāh loves over that which he loves:

﴿ لَن تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا مِن
شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

By no means shall you attain *al-birr* (piety, righteousness, etc., it means here Allāh's reward, i.e., Paradise), unless you spend (in Allāh's cause) of that which you love; and whatever of good you spend, Allāh knows it well.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:92]

This is what is befitting for the person to spend from—that which is beneficial. Especially if he himself loves it, then he is to give charity with it. This is an evidence for his *īmān* and the fact that he gives precedence to Allāh's pleasure, as Allāh has said concerning the Anṣār:

﴿ وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن
يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

And they give them (Emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.

[Sūrah al-Ḥashr 59:9]

We ask Allāh to give us all success in what He loves and is pleased with. And may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE SIXTH SITTING

The Night Prayer of the Prophet ﷺ in Ramaḍān & Mention of Some of His Characteristics

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

To proceed:

This is a mention of some of the characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ, for his characteristics, his attributes, and his virtues are very many. The scholars have written detailed works regarding them and have named them "the books of Muḥammad's virtues." Allāh has given this noble Prophet praiseworthy characteristics that He has not given to any other person from the creation, because he is the best of the messengers and He is the Imām of the righteous and the leader of the children of Ādam. So he has not been preceded in any characteristic of good nor can anyone compete with or outdo him in them ﷺ.

As it relates to the night prayer, he would stand for long periods of time to the point that his feet became swollen due to the length of his standing. ʿĀ'ishah ؓ said to him regarding this, "Why do you stand for such a long period of time when Allāh has already forgiven your past and present sins?" He said:

أفلا أكون عبداً شكوراً؟

Well, shall I not then be a thankful servant?[1]

This was to the point that Ḥudhayfah bin al-Yamān ؓ stood along with the Prophet ﷺ one night and he thought that he could stand along with him, so the Prophet ﷺ stood and recited Sūrah al-Baqarah in its entirety, then he recited Sūrah an-Nisā' in its entirety, then he recited Sūrah Āli ʿImrān in its entirety. He did not pass by a verse that spoke about mercy expect that he stopped at it and asked for Allāh's mercy, and he did not pass by a verse in which the punishment was mentioned except that he stopped and sought refuge from Allāh's punishment.[2] Ḥudhayfah said, "I considered sitting down and leaving him standing."[3]

This was from the length of his standing; this is a glimpse of his night prayer ﷺ. His *rukū'* was of similar length to his standing and his prostration was of similar length to his *rukū'*.

As for the fast, he ﷺ would fast frequently to the point that one would say that he would never stop fasting, and at other times, he would go so long without fasting that one would say he would never fast again (i.e., an optional fast). Therefore, he frequently fasted and he also frequently went long periods without fasting ﷺ.

In his *jihād* in Allāh's path, he was the most courageous of the people and he was at the forefront of the armies to the point that the Companions would be afraid for him from the enemy because he ﷺ was the closest of them to the enemy, to the point that ʿAlī bin Abī Ṭālib ؓ, who was from the most courageous of the people, said, “We used to seek refuge with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when the battle became intense and the fighting became fierce, and he was the closest of us to the enemy. This was due to his bravery in *jihād* and war.”[4]

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[1] Reported by al-Bukhāri (1130) and Muslim (819).

[2] Reported by Muslim (772).

[3] Reported by al-Bukhāri (1135) and Muslim (773).

As it relates to charity and generosity, he was the most generous of the people, and he would not hoard anything from the abundance of that which would come to him from the wealth of Allāh from here and there due to *jihād* and the spoils of war, gifts, and wealth. He would not hoard anything. Rather, he would spend it in the path of Allāh upon those who were in need, to the point that death came to him ﷺ and he had a debt. He had mortgaged his armor to a Jewish man for some food which he had given to his family.[5] He did not leave behind any wealth or inheritance; rather, he would live amongst his Companions just as the poor lived because he did not hoard anything from wealth. Instead, he spent it in the path of Allāh, either in *jihād* or giving to the poor and the indigent or uniting the hearts of the people upon Islām.

And he would not reject one who asked, to the point that if someone asked him for the garment that he was wearing, he would remove it and give it to him. You are familiar with the story of *ash-shamlah* (the garment) that was given as a gift to the Prophet ﷺ when he was in need of it and he wore it. Someone asked him for it, so he immediately took it off and gave it to him because he ﷺ would not reject anyone who asked him.

This is his description in terms of generosity and giving of wealth. However, he would not give wealth in ignorance, extravagance, or wastefulness. He would spend it in the path of Allāh and put it in its proper place so that the benefit would return to the Muslims.

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[4] On the authority of ʿAlī bin Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه who said, “On the day of the Battle of Badr, we were seeking refuge with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and he was the nearest of us to the enemy, and he was the most intense of the people upon that day in fighting.” Reported by Aḥmad (1/86). Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir said in his verification of *Al-Musnad*: “Its chain of narration is *ṣaḥīḥ*.” (654).

[5] On the authority of ʿĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها who said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ died, and his armor was mortgaged to a Jewish man for three *ṣāʿ* of wheat.” Reported by al-Bukhāri (2916) and Muslim (1603).

This is how he would spend. And in Ramaḍān, he was more generous than normal; in the month of Ramaḍān, he ﷺ was more generous in doing good than a free blowing wind. The Muslim cannot be on par with the Messenger ﷺ nor can he be equivalent to him. However, following his example is required. Allāh has said:

﴿ لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ
يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴾

Indeed, in the Messenger of Allāh (Muḥammad ﷺ) you have a good example to follow, for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allāh and the Last Day and remembers Allāh much.

[Sūrah al-Aḥzāb 33:21]

Hence, the Muslim follows the example of the Messenger ﷺ in these characteristics in proportion to his ability. He is not able to be equivalent to the Messenger ﷺ, but he must follow his example to the best of his ability. Therefore, he prays the night prayer, he fasts some days, and he gives charity from his wealth in proportion to his ability and what he has with him. Thus, he takes part in every characteristic of good, following the example of the Prophet ﷺ. He struggles in the path of Allāh; he calls to Allāh; he commands what is good and prohibits what is evil, and so on. Therefore, the Muslim is not negligent in doing good, saying, "I am not like the Messenger." Rather, you are commanded to follow the example of the Messenger and do what you are able to.

However, the Messenger ﷺ has no equal in terms of the characteristics of good and acts of righteousness. In terms of calling to Allāh, commanding what is good, and forbidding what is evil, he would exert efforts and even expose himself to danger in calling the disbelievers, hypocrites, Jews, and Christians; he would call to Allāh in every venue and on every occasion. He would depart from Makkah, such as the instance wherein he went to Ṭā'if, and he would go out on the days of Ḥajj, exposing himself to the tribes in Minā, calling them to Allāh, even though they had enmity and hatred for the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and they desired to kill him. However, Allāh protected him from them. He would expose himself to danger in the path of calling to Allāh and he desired that the people should be guided to the truth. He was saddened when they did not respond to him. And it would cause heaviness in his chest when he saw that the people did not come to the faith. This was due to his kindness for them and his concern that they should be punished by Allāh, to the point that Allāh said concerning him:

﴿ لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

It may be that you (O Muḥammad ﷺ) are going to kill yourself with grief, that they do not become believers.

[Sūrah ash-Shu'arā' 26:3]

Meaning: Perhaps you would bring yourself to destruction calling them to Allāh due to the fact that they will not believe, and Allāh clarified to him that it is only upon him to convey the message and to call to Allāh ﷻ; as for guiding the hearts, this is in the hands of Allāh. Therefore, nothing is upon the Messenger except the conveyance of the message, and he conveyed it in the clearest manner and he did not fall short in it at all. He clarified to the people everything Allāh had revealed to him, to the point that he said during his Farewell Pilgrimage:

ألا هل بلّغتُ؟

Have I conveyed the message?

They said, "We testify that you have conveyed the message, you have discharged the trust, and you have advised us." He said:

اللهم اشهد.

O Allāh, bear witness.[6]

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[6] Reported by Muslim (1218).

This is how the Messenger ﷺ was in his calling the people to the good, commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil. He desired good for them and he desired success for them. He wanted safety and happiness for them in this life and the Hereafter because he ﷺ was the sincerest of the people; so he conveyed the message with sincerity, and he was trustworthy, truthful, and a conveyor from Allāh ﷻ until Allāh completed the religion by way of him, perfected His favor, established the evidence, and clarified the way. He did not die until he had discharged and completed all of the duties and obligations of messengership. He said:

تركتكم على البيضاء، ليلها كنهارها. لا يزيغ عنها إلا هالك.

I have left you upon clarity; its night is like its day. No one deviates from it except one who is destroyed.[7]

He likewise said:

إني تركت فيكم ما إن تمسكتم به لن تضلوا بعدي: كتاب الله وسنتي.

Indeed, I have left amongst you that which, if you hold steadfast to it, you will never stray after me: the Book of Allāh and my Sunnah.[8]

This is how he ﷺ was and these were some of his attributes. Therefore, it is upon the Muslim to follow the example of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in the characteristics of good, in accordance with one's ability and what he is able to do. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

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[7] Reported by Ibn Mājah (43) and Aḥmad (4/126).

[8] Reported by Muslim (1218) on the authority of Jābir that he said during his Farewell Pilgrimage:

قد تركت فيكم ما لن تضلوا بعده إن اعتصمتم به: كتاب الله، وأنتم مسئولون عني، فما أنتم قائلون؟

I have left amongst you that which you will never go astray thereafter if you hold fast to it: the Book of Allāh. And you shall be asked about me, so what shall you say?

THE SEVENTH SITTING

The Virtue of Reciting the Qur'ān

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

This is a clarification of the virtue of the tremendous Qur'ān and the virtue of reciting it abundantly. Indeed, the Qur'ān is the speech of Allāh ﷻ which He spoke with, in reality, and Jibrīl heard it from Him and conveyed it from Allāh to Muḥammad ﷺ as a revelation. And Muḥammad ﷺ conveyed it to his *ummah*, and his *ummah* transmitted it generation after generation. Therefore, it is the Book of Allāh, concerning which falsehood cannot approach it from before it nor behind it. It is a revelation from One who is All-Wise and Praiseworthy. It is guidance, light, a criterion, a radiant lamp, and mercy. It is the Straight Path.

Allāh ﷻ has taken the responsibility of preserving it upon Himself. Therefore, no distortion, alteration, or change has come to it. Rather, it remains just as Allāh revealed it so that it may be guidance for the creation. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴾

Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the *dhikr* (i.e., the Qur'ān) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:9]

Hence, it remains just as Allāh sent it down; pure until Allāh raises it back up at the end of time. For indeed, at the end of time, it shall be raised up. So from Him it began; Allāh sent it down, and to Him it shall return at the end of time. It shall be lifted from the *maṣāḥif* and from the chests of men.[1] This will be with the establishment of the Hour. As long as this Qur'ān remains, then the people are in a state of good, and they are to return to it, be guided by it, act in accordance with it, and rule amongst themselves by way of it. When it is raised up, the state of the world will be corrupted; and we ask Allāh for safety. Destruction will come to them. This Qur'ān was sent down by Allāh ﷻ so that they may recite it and act upon it. Allāh has said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا
رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٢٩﴾ لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ
أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

Verily, those who recite the Book of Allāh (this Qur'ān), and perform *aṣ-ṣalāh* and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a (sure) trade gain that will never perish. That He may pay them their wages in full, and give them (even) more, out of His grace. Verily! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense).

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:29-30]

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[1] On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ who said, "The Qur'ān will be lifted up in one night and there shall not remain one verse within a *muṣḥaf* nor in the heart of any man except that it would be removed." Reported by at-Tirmidhi (3343).

It is the seal of the divine Books and the greatest and the most noble of them. It acts as a presiding judge and ruler over them, and it confirms what they contain from truth and rebuts what they contain from distortion and alteration. Allāh has said:

﴿ إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَقُصُّ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَكْثَرَ الَّذِي
هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ (٧٦) وَإِنَّهُ لَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٧٧) ﴾

Verily, this Qur'ān narrates to the Children of Israel most of that about which they differ. And truly, it (this Qur'ān) is a guide and a mercy to the believers.

[Sūrah an-Naml 27:76-77]

Likewise, Allāh has said in Sūrah al-Mā'idah:

﴿ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ
الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ﴾

And We have sent down to you (O Muḥammad ﷺ) the Book (this Qur'ān) in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it and *muhaymin* (trustworthy in highness and a witness) over it.

[Sūrah al-Mā'idah 5:48]

Indeed, Allāh تعالى has placed within it that which He has not placed in other than it from books. It contains the *tawḥīd* of Allāh عزّ وجلّ and it contains information of the past, as well as information of the future, what will occur at the end of the world, as well as information regarding the Day of Judgment. It contains the news of what was before you and the news of what will be after you.[2]

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[2] On the authority of 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه who said, "Indeed, I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying:

ستكون فتن.

"'There shall be tribulations.'

"I said, 'And what is the way out from it?' He said:

It contains clarification of the legislative rulings and the rulings between people in that wherein they differ. It contains clarification of the truth from falsehood, so it is the criterion because it differentiates between truth and falsehood. It contains stories—the stories of the first people and the information of the previous nations, as well as information regarding the messengers and those who believed in them, and information regarding those who belied them and that which occurred to the deniers, as well as that with which Allāh honored those who were obedient, from victory, assistance, and them being made uppermost over those who opposed them.

It contains examples and lessons. It contains admonitions. It contains descriptions of Paradise and the Fire, as well as the attributes of the believers, the attributes of the hypocrites, and the attributes of the disbelievers. All of this is present in the Qur'ān and more. It contains promises and threats. It contains knowledge which none knows except Allāh and it comprises *tawḥīd* and *'aqīdah* as well as clarification of the names and attributes of Allāh. It contains the command to worship Him and to abandon worshipping what is besides Him. It contains warning against polytheism and a clarification of the various types of polytheism. It contains clarification of everything that is connected to *īmān* in Allāh and the Last Day as well as the angels, the Books, the prophets, and *īmān* in the divine decree, its good and its evil. It contains the pillars of *īmān* and the pillars of Islām. It contains knowledge, informa-

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كتاب الله فيه نبأ ما كان قبلكم وخبر ما بعدكم وحكم ما بينكم وهو الفصل ليس بالهزل من تركه من جبار قصمه الله ومن ابتغى الهدى في غيره أضله الله وهو حبل الله المتين وهو الذكر الحكيم وهو الصراط المستقيم هو الذي لا تزيغ به الأهواء ولا تلتبس به الألسنة.

" 'The Book of Allāh. It contains the news of what was before you and the news of what will be after you and the ruling of what is between you. It is the criteria for judgment without jest. He who abandons it from amongst the oppressive people, then Allāh will crush him. And he who desires guidance by way of other than it, Allāh will humiliate him. It is the firm rope of Allāh, and it is the wise reminder, it is the straight path, and it is that which desires cannot distort and the tongues cannot alter.' "

Reported by ad-Dārimi (3331), Aḥmad (1/91), and at-Tirmidhi (2911).

tion, stories, examples, lessons, and admonitions, which none know except Allāh.

However, every person endowed with knowledge will take from it in proportion to his knowledge, and that which he is ignorant of is greater than that; for indeed, it is an ocean, the knowledge of which cannot be encompassed and its secrets cannot be unlocked. It is the speech of Allāh ﷿, and its virtue over other speech is like the virtue of Allāh over His creation.

An encouragement has come regarding reciting it abundantly, contemplating upon it, and acting in accordance with it. Allāh has said:

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾

(This is) a Book (the Qur'ān) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its verses, and that men of understanding may remember.

[Sūrah Ṣād 38:29]

Therefore, the goal of reciting it is not merely passing over its verses and completing the Qur'ān 10 or 20 times. This is not the objective. The objective is to benefit from the Qur'ān and to act upon the Qur'ān. However, reciting it is a means to action. And reciting is a righteous action. However, one should not stop short at reciting it. Rather, it is a must that one acts upon it and it is a must that one contemplates it; and it is a must that one ponders over its meanings until the servant is able to benefit from the speech of Allāh ﷿. There has come in the *ḥadīth* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

من قرأ حرفا من كتاب الله فله حسنة والحسنة بعشر أمثالها، لا أقول الم حرف، ولكن ألف حرف، ولام حرف، وميم حرف.

He who recites one letter from the Book of Allāh will have a good

deed, and the good deed is multiplied 10 times its like. And I do not say that *alif, lām, mīm* is one letter; rather, *alif* is a letter, *lām* is a letter, and *mīm* is a letter.[3]

With every letter, one shall receive a good deed, and each good deed is like 10 good deeds. And these are multiplied by Allāh ﷻ. Therefore, reciting the Qur'ān is desirable for the Muslim, as well as acting upon it and understanding its meanings; these are all desirable for the Muslim. Otherwise, for the one who recites the Qur'ān and does not act upon it, it will be a proof against him on the Day of Judgment. Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ said:

والقرآن حجة لك أو حجة عليك.

The Qur'ān is an argument for you or against you."[4]

It is an argument for you if you act upon it, and it is an argument against you if you do not act upon it. Indeed, the Qur'ān will be a litigant on the Day of Judgment against people who carried it yet opposed it and did not act upon it. He who the Qur'ān follows, it will push him into the Fire, and he who follows the Qur'ān, then indeed the Qur'ān will lead him to Paradise. The Qur'ān will either be in front of you, and thus guide you to good and lead you to Paradise, or it will be behind your back, and thus push you to the Fire; and refuge is sought with Allāh. Allāh the Exalted said:

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[3] Reported by at-Tirmidhi (2915) and at-Tirmidhi said, "This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb.*"

[4] On the authority of Abū Mālik al-Ash'ari who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

الطهور شطر الإيمان، والحمد لله تملأ الميزان، وسبحان الله والحمد لله تملآن أو تملأ ما بين السماوات والأرض، والصلاة نور، والصدقة برهان ، والصبر ضياء ، والقرآن حجة لك أو عليك ، كل الناس يغدو، فبائع نفسه فمعتقها أو موبقها.

Purity is half of faith. The statement *al-ḥamdulillāh* fills the scales. The statement *subḥānAllāh* fills that which is between the heavens and the earth. Prayer is a light. Charity is a proof. Patience is a radiant lamp. And the Qur'ān is an argument for you or against you. Every person begins his day as the merchant of his own soul, either freeing it or bringing about its destruction.

Reported by Muslim (223).

﴿ وَأُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرَكُم بِهِ وَمَن بَلَغَ ﴾

“This Qur'ān has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.”

[Sūrah al-An'ām 6:19]

Therefore, it is a warner and it is an evidence. It is the Qur'ān. It is light for he whom Allāh gives success. Hence, after the revelation of the Qur'ān, no one has an excuse, because Allāh ﷾ has clarified within it the truth from falsehood and guidance from misguidance. Therefore, he who takes it and acts upon it shall be from the fortunate with Allāh, and he who turns away from it shall be from the miserable, as Allāh has said:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ ﴾

But whosoever turns away from My reminder (i.e., neither believes in this Qur'ān nor acts on its orders, etc.) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.

[Sūrah Ṭā-Hā 20:124]

We ask Allāh for safety and that He make us and you from the people of the Qur'ān who preserve it, recite it as it should be recited, act upon it, and are guided by way of its guidance. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

THE EIGHTH SITTING

The Drinks of the People of Paradise

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

Allāh ﷾ has mentioned the drinks of the people of Paradise. He said:

﴿ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ
طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ
مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ﴾

In it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure). Therein for them is every kind of fruit.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:15]

These drinks are the drinks of the people of this world. Allāh has mentioned that they are in Paradise. However, they differ from what is in this world and from what the people know, although they share similar names and similar meanings. However, they differ in their reality and description, for the drinks in this world will come to an end. As for the drinks of Paradise, they will never come to an end. The drinks of this world are limited, while the drinks of Paradise are flowing rivers. The drinks of this world change and become corrupted; if water is still, then it is defiled and tainted. As for the water in Paradise, it will never change or become corrupted, whether it is flowing or still.

The milk in this world, as time expires, spoils and becomes rotten, and perhaps it ferments. As for the milk of Paradise, its taste never changes no matter how long it remains and no matter how long it goes unused. It is perpetually sweet and does not change.

The wine of this world is filthy and impure; it causes the intellect to go and it intoxicates and subjects those who drink it to threats (from Allāh). It drags them to corruption and loss of the intellect. It is the mother of all evils, and Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ have prohibited it and the legislation has deemed the alcohol of this world to be prohibited. It also brings about sicknesses in the body and corrupts the body of the one who is addicted to it, subjecting him to destruction and bringing about chronic illnesses that are incurable. Allāh has referred to it as *rijs* (filth) from the handiwork of the Shayṭān.

As for the wine of Paradise, it is a good wine that contains no ill effects and no filth. It does not cause the loss of one's intellect.

﴿ لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ ﴾

Wherefrom they will get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication.

[Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah 56:19]

Allāh has negated from the wine of Paradise the ill effects of the alcohol of this life, for the alcohol of this world is impure while the wine of Paradise is pure. Due to this, Allāh has said:

﴿ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ ﴾

Delicious to those who drink.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:15]

This is in opposition to the wine of this life—it contains no deliciousness; rather, it is bitter and disgusting to the taste, it contains a foul odor, and it has evil effects on the one who drinks it. Allāh has set in place a prescribed punishment for the one who drinks it: he is flogged with 80 lashes and thereafter deemed untrustworthy such that his testimony is unacceptable unless he repents to Allāh ﷾. This is because he is one who commits a major sin. As for the wine of Paradise, it is pure, beneficial, and delicious. It does not contain any of the harms of the alcohol of this world, although it shares the same name. The meaning and reality are very different.

From that which is within Paradise of drinks is honey. It is also present in this world and it is from the most delicious and beneficial drinks. It contains healing, as Allāh ﷾ has mentioned. In addition to being delicious, it also contains healing for the people.

The honey of Paradise is better than the honey of this world. Rather, it only resembles the honey of this world in name. Due to this, Allāh said:

﴿ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ﴾

And rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure)

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:15]

This is because the honey of this world contains impurities and is in need of being purified. It takes work after its acquisition. This is in opposition to the honey of Paradise, for it is pure in its origin and the people of Paradise do not need to work to purify and refine it like one has to work to purify the honey of this world. Likewise, the honey of this world is small in quantity. As for the honey of Paradise, it is in rivers that flow:

﴿ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ﴾

And rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure)

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:15]

And the rivers are many.[1] This is from the amazing science of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, that he causes these rivers to flow in Paradise with something that is known to be minimal in the *dunyā*. This is from that which indicates that Paradise is greatly different from this world. However, that which is in this world from the things that are in Paradise is only a small glimpse. This is to the point that Ibn 'Abbās said, "There is nothing in this world that is in Paradise except the names." Meaning, what is in Paradise is completely different from what is in this world, even though what is in this world may be similar to it in some regards and may have a similar name; they are completely different.

Similarly, the rest of that which is in Paradise from fruits and delights is different from what is in this world to such a large extent that none knows except Allāh. Mankind only knows of what is in Paradise based upon what is a counterpart to it with them in this life; as for that which has no counterpart in this life, Allāh has kept it hidden from them and none knows it except Him. Allāh said:

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

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[1] On the authority of Ḥakīm bin Mu'āwiyah who reported from his father from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

إن في الجنة بحر الماء، وبحر العسل، وبحر اللبن، وبحر الخمر، ثم تشقق الأنهار بعد.

Indeed, in Paradise there is an ocean of water and an ocean of honey and an ocean of milk and an ocean of wine. And rivers spring forth from them.

Reported by at-Tirmidhi (2576) and he said, "This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*."

No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do.

[Sūrah as-Sajdah 32:17]

No one has full knowledge of the description of Paradise and that which it contains except Allāh ﷻ. He has only clarified to us certain things that Paradise contains so that we may know this and thus be earnest in seeking it and exerting efforts to acquire it by way of righteous actions. Likewise, He placed within this world glimpses of what is in the Fire so that we may be afraid of the Fire and avoid that which causes entrance into it. Everything that causes the people pain in this life and everything they hate—every illness, every harm, every evil in this life—its counterpart in the Hellfire (and refuge is sought with Allāh) is more severe and more lasting. When the people know these glimpses within this life of that which is in the Fire, this will bring about fear and cause them to flee from the Fire. Therefore, extreme heat and cold in this life has a counterpart in the Fire. However, it is more severe and more lasting. Likewise, the fire in this life is such that the Fire of the Hereafter is more severe than it, more lasting, and hotter.[2]

﴿ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرًّا ۚ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴾

The Fire of Hell is more intense in heat, if only they could understand!

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:81]

Likewise is the case of pain. The Fire contains pain that none knows except Allāh. The firm mountains will be blasted away within it.

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[2] On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

ناركم جزء من سبعين جزءا من نار جهنم قيل يا رسول الله إن كانت لكافية قال فضلت عليهن بتسعة وستين جزءا كلهن مثل حرها.

Your fire is one of 70 parts of the Fire of Hell. It was said, "O Messenger of Allāh, indeed it would be sufficient (as punishment)." He said, "The Fire is 69 times more intense than it. Each level is similar to it in heat."

Reported by al-Bukhāri (3265) and Muslim (2843).

However, the bodies of the people of the Hellfire will be punished therein for eternity; so they will not die therein and thus be relieved and rest by way of death. They will never die; they will remain therein being punished for all eternity, and we ask Allāh for safety.

This is from that which makes it binding upon the person to remember what is in the Hellfire, and it makes him fear it and avoid sins. And when he remembers what is in Paradise, then he must hope and long for the mercy of Allāh and thus perform righteous actions that draw him nearer to Paradise and bring about his entrance into it by way of the mercy of Allāh. This is from the wisdom of Allāh, the Exalted and High, that he gives glimpses in this life of what is in the two abodes, Paradise and the Fire. This is so the people may receive an admonition and a lesson and thus have fear and hope.

We ask Allāh to give us all success in what He loves and is pleased with. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE NINTH SITTING

The Etiquettes of Reciting the Qur'ān

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon Allāh's Messenger.

To proceed:

This is a glimpse of the etiquettes of reciting the Noble Qur'ān, for the Noble Qur'ān is the speech of Allāh. Therefore, it is obligatory to have veneration and respect for it and to recite it in the most excellent of conditions. From the etiquettes of recitation is that if one is reading from a *muṣḥaf,* then he must perform *wuḍū'*. It is not permissible for him to touch the *muṣḥaf* if he is not in a state of purity, due to the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

لا يمس القرآن إلا طاهر.

No one is to touch the Qur'ān except the pure.[1]

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[1] Reported by al-Ḥākim (3/485) and he said, "This *ḥadīth* has a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain, although they (al-Bukhāri and Muslim) did not report it." Az-Zayli'i graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Naṣab ar-Rāyah* (816) and al-Albāni graded it *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Irwā' al-Ghalīl* (122) and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (7780).

If he recites from memory, then it is recommended for him to perform *wuḍū'*, but it is permissible for him to recite without *wuḍū'*. As for he who is in a major state of impurity, such as *janābah* and during the menstrual cycle, it is not permissible for him to recite the Qur'ān at all—neither from the *muṣḥaf* nor from memory—until he purifies himself from the major impurity. This is because the Prophet ﷺ would recite the Qur'ān except when he was in a state of major impurity; he would not recite the Qur'ān until he performed *ghusl*.

From the etiquettes of reciting the Qur'ān is that one seeks refuge with Allāh from the accursed Shayṭān when he begins the recitation, due to the statement of Allāh:

﴿ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرًّا ۚ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴾

So when you want to recite the Qur'ān, seek refuge with Allāh from the Shayṭān (Satan), the outcast (the cursed one).

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:98]

This is because the Shayṭān is present with the reciter, seeking to confuse his recitation and disturb him and distract him from contemplation. Therefore, when he seeks refuge with Allāh from the cursed Shayṭān, Allāh protects him and keeps the Shayṭān away from him so that he may benefit from his recitation. Otherwise, the Shayṭān will whisper to him and distract him from the recitation. This is the benefit of seeking refuge when beginning one's recitation; it repels the Shayṭān.

From the etiquettes of reciting the Qur'ān is that when one begins a *sūrah,* he says, "In the name of Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy." This is because the *basmalah* was revealed at the beginning of every *sūrah,* with the exception of Sūrah at-Tawbah. As for the remaining chapters, it is recommended to begin with the *basmalah* when reciting them.

From the etiquettes of recitation is reciting slowly. And the meaning of reciting slowly is taking one's time and not rushing; giving each letter its due right in *tajwīd* in accordance to one's ability. What is important is that one takes his time when reciting and he reads verse by verse, stopping before every verse, and he is not to rush his recitation or recite briskly. This is an error in recitation. It is mentioned in a narration that it is prohibited to rush through one's recitation as is done in poetry,[2] and to quickly dispense of the verses as one disposes of inferior dates.

From the etiquettes of recitation is that one beautifies his voice with the Qur'ān so that he recites with the best voice possible. This is because beautifying the recitation and beautifying one's voice with the Qur'ān encourages listening to it, and it delights the reciter and the listener.

From the etiquettes of recitation is that one is mindful of those who are around him. So if there is one near him who is sleeping or another reciter reading or praying, then he should not raise his voice in a manner that disturbs those around him and causes harm. Rather, he is only to slightly raise his voice so that he hears himself and does not disturb others.

By way of this, we know that those who play sounds on the microphones from the mosques, thus disturbing the people in their homes, marketplaces, and neighboring mosques, have opposed what is legislated and they are sinning in doing so. They will not receive reward because this is harming others. As for if a person is alone, so he does not harm others by reciting audibly, then he may raise his voice to a level that is not excessive. It should only be to the point where he hears himself and those who are listening to him and are near to him can hear. Likewise is the case with the night prayer: If he is in a secluded place and there is no one around him sleeping, then he may recite audibly. As for if there are those present who may be disturbed or may be harmed by his audible recitation, then he is to lower his voice and be mindful of those who are around him. Some of the people are not mindful of those around them and thus they disturb the people; they disturb other worshipers, those who are listening to the Qur'ān, and those who are near them. This is prohibited. The Prophet ﷺ came out while his Companions were praying at night and reciting loudly. He said:

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[2] A man came to Ibn Mas'ūd and said, "I recited the Mufaṣṣal tonight in one *rak'ah*." He said, "This is the rushed recitation of poetry." Reported by al-Bukhāri (775) and Muslim (822).

كلكم يناجي ربه فلا يجهر بعضكم على بعض.

Each of you is consulting his Lord. Therefore, do not raise your voices over one another.[3]

He prohibited raising one's voice in a way that harms those around him.

From the etiquettes of recitation—rather, from that which is obligatory when reciting—is that one avoids grammatical errors which corrupt the recitation, from making that which is nominative accusative or making accusative that which is nominative, or making genitive that which is nominative (i.e., by misplacing the vowel markings), etc. One must avoid this and recite the verses with the proper vowel markings on the letters. So he observes the nominative as being nominative, the accusative as being accusative, and the genitive as being genitive. As for those whom Allāh has favored with knowing grammar, they are not in need of the vowel markings. They recite the Qur'ān based upon the principles of Arabic grammar. The vowel markings were placed there for those who are not proficient in Arabic. Each person is required to recite in the correct manner, observing that which is nominative, accusative, genitive, *majzūm*, and other than it.

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[3] On the authority of al-Bayāḍi who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ came out while the people were praying and their voices were raised with the recitation. He said:

إن المصلي يناجي ربه فلينظر بما يناجيه به ولا يجهر بعضكم على بعض بالقرآن.

Indeed, the worshiper is consulting his Lord. Therefore, let him look at what he is consulting Him with. Do not raise your voices over one another.

Reported by Aḥmad (4/433).

On the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri who said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ performed *i'tikāf* in the *masjid* and he heard the people raising their voices with the recitation while he was in his tent. He removed the curtain and said:

إلا كلكم مناج ربه فلا يؤذين بعضكم بعضا ولا يرفعن بعضكم على بعض بالقرآن - أو قال: في الصلاة.

"'Each of you is consulting his Lord. Therefore, do not harm one another and do not raise your voices over one another with the recitation.' (or he said: '...in prayer.')"

Reported by Aḥmad (3/94), Abū Dāwūd (1332), Ibn Khuzaymah (1162), al-Ḥākim (1/310-311), and al-Bayhaqi in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā* (3/11). Al-Ḥākim said, "This *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ* with the conditions of the two Shaykhs." Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him. Ibn 'Abdil-Barr said in *At-Tamhīd* (23/309): "The *ḥadīth* of al-Bayāḍi and the *ḥadīth* of Abū Sa'īd are both authentically established, and Allāh knows best."

From the greatest of the etiquettes of recitation is contemplation upon the Qur'ān, pondering over its meanings, gaining admonition from it, and reflecting upon it. The objective is not merely to finish the Qur'ān and pass over the verses and chapters quickly without benefiting from it and without being affected by the Qur'ān. This type of reading contains no benefit. Therefore, one must try to comprehend the Qur'ān as much as possible. If his intention is rectified, then Allāh will open for him the door of understanding and He will open for him the door of benefit from the Qur'ān. Allāh has said:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴾

Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'ān, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:24]

The Qur'ān contains things that are clear, which both the layman and the student know—mention of the Fire, mention of Paradise, mention of the punishment, mention of the bliss, the prohibition of usury, the prohibition of fornication, the prohibition of lying, the prohibition of cheating, the prohibition of (eating) *maytah;* all of these things are in the Qur'ān and everyone knows about them. So it contains things that are clear, such as the obligation of the prayer, the obligation of *zakāh*, the obligation of fasting, the obligation of Ḥajj; it contains things that are clear, and the obligation or prohibition of these things is known by all who read it. This is because the Qur'ān is in clear Arabic. So every Arab knows the meanings of the Qur'ān in accordance with their level of understanding and ability. There is no one who speaks Arabic—whether layman or scholar—except that he understands a large portion of the Qur'ān.

As for the intricate issues and rulings, this is specific to the scholars. Therefore, all can benefit from the Qur'ān—the layman, the student, and the scholar. Each person benefits from it in proportion to his ability. Therefore, the Muslim must contemplate the Qur'ān, reflect upon it, ponder over it, and benefit from it in accordance to his ability.

Allāh is the granter of success and the guide to the Straight Path. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE TENTH SITTING

Warning Against Following the Footsteps of the Shayṭān

All praise is due to Allāh, for his bounty and kindness. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ﴾

O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of the Shayṭān (Satan).

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:21]

He is calling His believing slaves; commanding them and prohibiting them. He commands them with that which will cause their entrance into Paradise and prohibits that which will cause their entrance into the Fire. Everything that Allāh the Exalted commands with is a reason for entrance into Paradise and everything that he has prohibited is a reason for entrance into the Fire.

Therefore, Allāh calls them even though He is free of any need from His servants. He does not call them for His own benefit nor due to a need that He has for them. Rather, He is free of all needs, Glorified be He. If all of them were to disbelieve, this would not decrease His kingdom in the least. And if all of them were to believe, this would not increase His kingdom in the least. His dominion is complete without them. However, they are the ones who are in need of faith. They are in need of righteous actions. They are the ones who are harmed by disbelief, polytheism, and sins. Therefore, He calls them for their benefit and He commands them for their own benefit. He prohibits them from that which harms them.

This is from His mercy and this is the greatest bounty, that Allāh calls you while He is not in need of you and you turn away from Him while you are in need of Him, and you distance yourself from Allāh while you cannot go without Him for a twinkling of an eye. This is from the most amazing of affairs and an indication of deviation in one's ideas, the corruption of one's thought process, and the loss of one's intellect. If the intellect was sound and intact, then it would know the wisdom in the commands of Allāh and His prohibitions, and that they, in essence, benefit them.

So if the people were to adhere to them, they would attain benefit in this life and the Hereafter, whereas, if they leave them off, harm will come to them in this life and the Hereafter. Therefore, they destroy themselves and cause loss to their own selves. They turn away from the obedience of Allāh while they are the ones who would benefit from obeying Allāh. Therefore, harm and benefit comes back to them. So, where are their intellects and what are they thinking? However, perhaps these intellects are deficient; thus, they do not benefit them. Allāh has said:

﴿ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا
وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ﴾

They have hearts wherewith they understand not, they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they

have ears wherewith they hear not.

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:179]

Meaning, they do not comprehend with a comprehension that benefits them nor do they examine with an examination that benefits them. They do not hear with hearing that benefits them. And if they do hear and see, their hearing and sight is like that of an animal—they see, yet they do not know. Thus, they take to that which contains destruction because they do not know any better. Likewise is the person who does not benefit from his intellect, hearing, and sight. This person is more astray than the animals because the animals will not be held accountable and they will not be called to account, whereas the human being is held accountable and called to account, and either punishment or reward awaits him. As Allāh has said:

﴿ أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ﴾

They are like cattle, nay, even more astray; those! They are the heedless ones.

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:179]

Just as Allāh calls to Paradise, the Shayṭān and his friends call to the Hellfire. Allāh ﷻ has said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَدْعُو حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴾

He only invites his *ḥizb* (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:6]

The difference between the call of Allāh and the call of the Shayṭān and his helpers is that they call to the Hellfire. This does not mean that they say to the people, "Come to the Hellfire." If they said this, then none would come. However, they call the people to follow their desires and forbidden lusts, and they beautify for them what is repugnant, giving it a fair image. They deceive them and trick them. Thus, they lead them astray, giving them the impression that they are sincere well-wishers, friends, and loved ones for them, while in reality, they are the most ardent of enemies. So you are between two calls: the call of Allāh تَعَالَىٰ to Paradise and the call of the Shayṭān and his group to the Fire. So be careful which one you respond to.

This is something clear. If you are upon the obedience of Allāh, uprightness, and love for what is good, preserving the obligatory matters, striving hard to do what is easy from the supererogatory acts of worship, then you have responded to the call of Allāh تَعَالَىٰ. If you are upon the opposite of this, frequently sinning and disobeying Allāh, abandoning the obligations, falling into what is impermissible without concern, then you have responded to the call of the Shayṭān and you are from the party of the Shayṭān. Therefore, it is upon you to repent to Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ and to free yourself from the Shayṭān while you have the chance. This is what is obligatory upon every Muslim to think about regarding himself and to gain insight; and Allāh is the granter of success.

May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE ELEVENTH SITTING

The End of the First 10 Days & the Entrance of the Middle 10 of the Month of Ramaḍān & What is Proper for the Muslim to Do Before the Time Misses Him

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

To proceed:

The first 10 days of the month of Ramaḍān have ended and this is one-third of the month. The second third, which is the middle portion of this month, has entered. Therefore, let us call ourselves to account. This 10 that has passed us—how did we conduct ourselves within it? Did we safeguard it by way of the obedience of Allāh ﷻ? Did we benefit from it?

He who has done well during it and has safeguarded it should increase (in good) and complete the rest of the month. And he who was negligent during the 10 that have passed and was lazy, then it is upon him to repent and to embark upon that which remains of this month before the entirety of the month misses him while he has not attained anything. He who was persistent upon sins and disobedience and did not repent to Allāh with the entrance of this month and the passing of these first 10 days, it is upon him to repent, to feel remorse, and to rectify his actions. Indeed, the opportunity is still in his hands.

The person in this *dunyā* is in three conditions. The first condition is the time that has passed; it is not possible for him to return to it. [Then] there is the time that is in the future; he does not know if he will encounter it or not. And there is the time that he is currently in. Therefore, it is upon him to take advantage before it passes him by just as the first time did. As the poet said:

What has passed was missed and what is in the future
is unknown;
You have the time that you are currently in.

Therefore, let us take a lesson by way of the passing days, for just a while ago, the month of Ramaḍān entered upon us, and now one-third of it has passed by with the first 10 days. It is as if it were the blinking of an eye. However, these days are blessed if the person has busied himself during them with the obedience of Allāh. Even though they are few in number, they have ended in goodness and have gone forth as a witness with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى for what one has done within them. If he filled them with evil deeds, sins, heedlessness, and opposition to what is correct, then they will testify against him on the Day of Judgment. However, if he repents to Allāh and seeks His forgiveness, then Allāh will forgive him and expiate from him that which has preceded of sins and iniquities; and the one who repents from a sin is like one who has no sin at all. This is from the kindness and mercy of Allāh to His servants, that He overlooks their sins, accepts their repentance when they repent to Him, and wipes away their sins.

However, the shortcoming is from the servant himself. Therefore, he is the one who deprives himself of the good contained in this time and of the blessing in this blessed time. He is the one who deprives himself such that these days pass upon him and he does not benefit from them. They pass upon him while he is harming himself within them, utilizing this time in that which is not praiseworthy, while Allāh calls him and will accept him if he repents. And Allāh rejoices at his repentance and rewards him for it, yet the servant turns away from his Lord.

Allāh calls you while He is not in need of you. However, His mercy, forbearance, and bounty causes Him to call you to Himself ﷻ due to your need and your own benefit; yet you turn away, while you are in need of Allāh and cannot do without Him for the twinkling of an eye. This is from the most amazing affairs. The first 10 days have passed; however, what was our time spent doing? How did we utilize it? What did these days close upon from our actions? It is (incumbent) that every one of us reflect upon this affair within these 10 days that have passed and in other than them from one's lifespan. Therefore, it is upon every person to repent to Allāh عز وجل and to take advantage of what remains from his life and what remains from this season of good before it passes by.

In these middle 10 days, the Prophet ﷺ used to perform *al-i'tikāf*. *Al-i'tikāf* means remaining in the *masjid* in a state of obedience to Allāh. The Prophet ﷺ would remain inside of his *masjid* at night and throughout the day, dedicating Himself to worship, reciting the Qur'ān, and remembrance, due to the knowledge that he had regarding these 10 days, that they are 10 tremendous days and they are blessed. Therefore, he would not leave anything to pass from them without utilizing it in the obedience of Allāh, because he ﷺ knew the value of time and he knew the worth of time in the truest sense. Therefore, he would leave off noble actions that he would do throughout the rest of the year, which in reality were all acts of worship and all acts of obedience to Allāh for the sake of Islām and the Muslims. However, during this month he would devote himself to worship and devote himself to Allāh عز وجل. Therefore, he would perform *al-i'tikāf* during the middle 10, seeking out the Night of Decree concerning which Allāh said:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ۝٣ فِيهَا
يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ۝٤ ﴾

We sent it (this Qur'ān) down on a blessed night. Verily, We are ever warning. Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments.

[Sūrah ad-Dukhān 44:3-4]

And Allāh also said:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ۝١ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ
۝٢ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۝٣ ﴾

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down in the Night of al-Qadr. And what will make you know what the Night of al-Qadr is? The Night of al-Qadr is better than a thousand months.

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:1-3]

This night is in the month of Ramaḍān without doubt. However, none knows which night it is on. It could perhaps be in the first night, or it could perhaps be in the last night. It could perhaps be somewhere in between. None knows which night it is from the month of Ramaḍān except Allāh ﷻ. He has hidden it from his servants and clarified its virtue so that they may strive hard during the entire month in order for their reward to be greater with Allāh. For he who strives hard during the entire month and stands throughout the nights of this month, then he has surely caught the Night of Decree and he has surely caught the virtue of all of these nights. Therefore, he has combined two virtues: The first is that he stood throughout the entirety of the month of Ramaḍān. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

من قام رمضان إيماناً واحتساباً غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه.

He who stands and prays in Ramaḍān out of faith, anticipating the

reward from Allāh, then whatever has preceded of his sins will be forgiven.

Likewise, he has caught the Night of Decree, which is better than a thousand months. Meaning, a good deed done on this night is better than a good deed that is done for a thousand months. This is a tremendous bounty within one night; an action done on this night is better than an action done for a thousand months. Few are the people who live for a thousand months, because a thousand months is more than 80 years. Hence, few are the people who live for 80 years completely in the obedience of Allāh. Therefore, he whom Allāh grants success in entering this night, then indeed, the reward of it is greater and more abundant than an action done for a thousand nights; and this is a bounty from Allāh.

Due to Him not demarcating it on a specific night, the Prophet ﷺ would be diligent in seeking it, performing *al-i'tikāf* in the middle portion of the month, hoping to catch the Night of Decree. Then, it was clarified to him ﷺ that it was in the last 10 nights. Therefore, he transferred his *i'tikāf* from the middle 10 nights to the last 10 nights, seeking after the Night of Decree—the virtue of which Allāh had mentioned—hoping to attain its nobility; and he ﷺ would seize opportunities of good and he would not leave anything to be wasted from His life. Nor would he leave off virtuous actions. And he would not abandon virtuous times to simply pass him by without taking advantage of them, despite what he had from righteous actions, in which no one was on par with him.

He ﷺ was the most fearful of Allāh from amongst the people and he had greater veneration for Allāh. In spite of this, he was diligent in taking advantage of these virtuous times and seeking them out. Therefore, it is proper for us—for we fall short and we are people of laziness, heedlessness, sins, and disobedience—to encourage ourselves and take advantage of these days and nights before they pass us by, for they will not return. So we should utilize them and not let a second pass us by, nor a day, nor a week, nor a month, nor a year; for this is time from your life and it will not return to you. However, if you repent to Allāh and rectify your actions, then Allāh will accept your repentance. As for if you persist in opposition, heedlessness, and turning away, then your entire life will go by in a state of loss. As Allāh ﷻ has said:

﴿ وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣) ﴾

By *al-ʿaṣr* (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, except those who believe (in Islamic monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth and recommend one another to patience.

[Sūrah al-ʿAṣr 103:1-3]

Every person is in a state of loss on the Day of Judgment, except he who is described with four characteristics. They are: *īmān* in Allāh, righteous actions, mutual cooperation upon the truth, and mutual cooperation upon patience. Therefore, he who is described with these four characteristics will be successful from this loss and he will profit and benefit from his life. He will benefit from seasons of good; his life is spent upon goodness. Whereas he who squanders this opportunity, this virtuous time, and this life, then he will be in a state of loss on the Day of Judgment. This is because profit is only by way of righteous actions, and it is not by wealth, status, or lineage. Profit is only by way of righteous actions. Therefore, if the person is given success in doing righteous actions throughout his life, then he has turned a profit even if he may be from the most indigent of the people, even if he may be from the lowest of people in his lineage and status; as long as he spends his life in the obedience of Allāh, then he is honorable with Allāh and he is noble with Allāh.

Allāh does not look at the bodies of the people nor does He look at their beauty. He only looks at their righteous actions, and He is the one who will elevate His slaves in degrees, no matter what his lineage may be and no matter what status he may have in this world. Perhaps he may be one who is looked down upon amongst the people. However, he is noble in the sight of Allāh عزوجل. Perhaps he may be poor in the life of this world, but he is rich by way of righteous actions; he is rich by way of good deeds. Perhaps he is considered to be lowly in the life of this world, but he occupies a high status with Allāh تبارك وتعالى in the Gardens of Bliss. Therefore, what is given due consideration is not the weight of the people and their status. Rather, what is given due consideration is righteous actions. So Allāh has said:

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴾

Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has *at-taqwā.*

[Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt 49:13]

May Allāh give us all success in what He loves and is pleased with. And may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE TWELFTH SITTING

Warning Against the Fire

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

Allāh has mentioned descriptions of the Fire, and refuge is sought with Allāh. It is the abode that Allāh has prepared for His enemies from amongst the disbelievers, the hypocrites, the disobedient sinners, and the wrongdoers. It is the abode of the evil. Allāh has prepared within it various types of punishments that none knows except him ﷻ. He has mentioned some of its types in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Therefore, the Fire is of variant levels, beneath one another. As for Paradise, it is levels one above the other. The levels of the Hellfire shall be the homes of its people in proportion to their actions. Some of them will receive a more severe punishment than others. The hypocrites are such that:

﴿ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرْكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَن تَجِدَ
لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴾

Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:145]

The hypocrites are those who outwardly manifest Islām, deceitfully plotting, while their hearts are evil and disbelieving. They reject the Messenger ﷺ and what he has come with. However, they outwardly manifest Islām in order to achieve their goals. They shall be more severely punished than the disbelievers who outwardly manifest their disbelief and enmity, because disbelievers who outwardly manifest their disbelief are known by the Muslims, so they are able to take precautions to protect themselves from their evil. As for the hypocrites, they outwardly manifest Islām. Allāh has said:

﴿ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴾

They (think to) deceive Allāh and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:9]

However, the believers have a good thought about them, so they cannot caution themselves against them. Therefore, they are spies for the disbelievers and the Jews, they guide the disbelievers to the destruction of the Muslims, and they rejoice at the victory of disbelief and the dominance of the disbelievers while they are saddened by the victory and dominance of Islām. These are from the attributes of the hypocrites. Due to this, they will be in the lowest level of the Hellfire and the rest of the disbelievers will be above them.

The Hellfire has a number of names. It is called an-Nār (the Fire); it is called Jahannam; it is called as-Sa'īr (the blazing flame); it is called Saqar; it is called al-Jaḥīm; it is called al-Hāwiyah; and other than this from the names it has been given. This is from that which indicates that it is many levels and that its people are variant in their punishment therein and with their places in it. As the Prophet

ﷺ informed us when he said:

إن أهون الناس عذاباً من يوضع في أخمص قدمه جمرة يغلي منها دماغه.

Indeed, the lowest of the people of the Hellfire in punishment is he who has hot coals placed beneath his feet which causes his brain to boil.[1]

In another narration:

يلبس نعلين من نار يغلي منهما دماغه ما يرى أن أحداً أشد عذابا منه مع أنه من أهن أهل النار عذاباً.

He will be made to wear two sandals of fire that cause his brain to boil. He will not think that anyone is more severely punished than he, yet he is the lightest of the people of the Hellfire in terms of punishment.[2]

This person will be the least of them in punishment, so how about the most severe punishment? And refuge is sought with Allāh. Their drink in the Hellfire will be called *al-muhl,* which consists of hot water and that which cannot be endured. There is also a drink called *aṣ-ṣadīd,* which consists of fluids that leak from the bodies of the inhabitants of the Hellfire.

Their food will be the tree of *zaqqūm* which grows in the Hellfire. Allāh has said concerning it:

﴿ إِنَّ شَجَرَتَ الزَّقُّومِ ﴿٤٣﴾ طَعَامُ الْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

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[1] Reported by al-Bukhāri (6561) and Muslim (213).

[2] Reported by Muslim (213 and 364).

On the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إن أهون الناس عذابا أبو طالب وهو منتعل بنعلين يغلي منهما دماغه.

The lightest of the people in punishment (i.e., in the Fire) is Abū Ṭālib; he will be made to wear sandals that cause his brain to boil.

Reported by Muslim (212).

Verily, the tree of *zaqqūm* will be the food of the sinners.

[Sūrah ad-Dukhān 44:43-44]

He mentioned in another verse:

﴿ إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ۝٦٤ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ
رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ ۝٦٥ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَآكِلُونَ مِنْهَا فَمَالِئُونَ مِنْهَا
الْبُطُونَ ۝٦٦ ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ۝٦٧ ثُمَّ إِنَّ
مَرْجِعَهُمْ لَإِلَى الْجَحِيمِ ۝٦٨ ﴾

Verily, it is a tree that springs out of the bottom of the Hellfire; the shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils. Truly, they will eat thereof and fill their bellies therewith. Then, on the top of that, they will be given boiling water to drink so that it becomes a mixture (of boiling water and *zaqqūm* in their bellies). Then thereafter, verily, their return is to the flaming fire of Hell.

[Sūrah aṣ-Ṣāffāt 37:64-68]

Therefore, their drink—and refuge is sought with Allāh—is the most despicable of drinks and the hottest of them. Due to the intensity of the heat, it burns the face when it is brought near to the face of the one who drinks it; it boils his face and causes its skin to fall off due to the intensity of its heat. And their food is the tree of *zaqqūm* and *aḍ-ḍarī'*. It is a food that will neither increase one's weight nor will it satisfy one's hunger. So they will be in a perpetual state of hunger, eating without that hunger departing; and they will drink, but their thirst will not be quenched, and every time they drink, the thirst will increase. Allāh has said:

﴿ وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ۝٤١ فِي
سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ ۝٤٢ وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ ۝٤٣ لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ

۝٤٤ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ ۝٤٥ وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى
الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝٤٦ ﴾

And those on the Left Hand, who will be those on the Left Hand? In fierce hot wind and boiling water, and shadow of black smoke, (that shadow) neither cool, nor (even) good; verily, before that, they indulged in luxury, and were persisting in great sin (joining partners in worship along with Allāh, committing murders and other crimes, etc.)

[Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah 56:41-46]

And this is due to *shirk*. Allāh says:

﴿ وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا
لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴾

And they used to say, "When we die and become dust and bones, shall we then indeed be resurrected?"

[Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah 56:47]

This is due to the fact that they deny the resurrection. Allāh said to his Prophet:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ ۝٤٩ لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتِ
يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ۝٥٠ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمُكَذِّبُونَ ۝٥١
لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ ۝٥٢ فَمَالِئُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ۝٥٣
فَشَارِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ۝٥٤ فَشَارِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهِيمِ ۝٥٥ ﴾

Say (O Muḥammad ﷺ): "(Yes) verily, those of old, and those of later times. All will surely be gathered together for the appointed meeting of a known Day. Then, moreover, verily, you the erring ones, the deniers (of resurrection)! You verily will eat of

the trees of *zaqqūm*. Then you will fill your bellies therewith, and drink boiling water on top of it, so you will drink (that) like thirsty camels!"

[Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah 56:49-55]

Al-hīm is a thirsty camel. This is because, when a camel gets thirsty, its drinking intensifies. Likewise is the case of the people of the Hellfire. They will drink just as the thirsty camel drinks. However, Allāh said:

﴿ هَـٰذَا نُزُلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴾

That will be their entertainment on the Day of Recompense!

[Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah 56:56]

Their abode will be their resting place, and it is an evil resting place. This is the Fire and these are its people. The Fire is not specific to the disbelievers. Rather, the disobedient believers will enter it as well as the people of major sins from the believers, and they will be punished therein. They shall remain in it for a long period of time, to the point that they become coals and their bodies are burned and become like hot coals. Then they will be brought out of the Fire thereafter and placed in the River of Life. There, their bodies will grow and rejuvenate; then they will enter Paradise.

In summary, the believers who are sinners are in great danger. Therefore, a person should not be deceived and say, "I am a believer," and then do what he does from sins, taking them lightly and believing they will not harm him. Sins—and refuge is sought with Allāh—(are such that) the danger of them is great, and they subject the one who commits them to the Hellfire and punishment therein. Perhaps he may remain in it for a hundred years and then come out of it thereafter. So the danger is great.

The Hellfire—and refuge is sought with Allāh—is such that none knows its true description except Allāh ﷻ. However, He has mentioned some of its descriptions so that the believers may be aware of actions that will cause them to enter it. Every impermissible desire and every act of disobedience in its various types causes people to enter the Fire. Therefore, the danger is great for a person. He must avoid sins that are major and those that are minor, because the minor sins are taken lightly by the people and thus become major sins. The minor sins gather upon a person until they destroy him, just as raindrops gather in a valley, causing a large body of water to assemble; likewise, sins gather together upon a person and thus destroy him.

Therefore, it is obligatory upon a Muslim to be aware of sins, and if he falls into any sins, then he must hasten to repent; and Allāh (the Majestic and High) accepts repentance of the one who repents. Therefore, one should not take disobedience lightly and be deceived by the fact that Allāh overlooks, nor should one be amazed by himself and thus continue for long periods upon disobedience and having overwhelming hope in the mercy of Allāh. Yes, the mercy of Allāh is vast, but His punishment is real; His punishment is painful. Therefore, the person should not feel safe from the plan of Allāh, nor should he take sins and disobedience lightly. Perhaps he takes a minor sin lightly and it drags him to a major sin, or perhaps he takes a minor sin lightly and it intensifies and grows and thus destroys him while he does not perceive it. So it is obligatory upon the person to beware of all sins and acts of disobedience, to hasten to repent, and to increase in seeking forgiveness. He should increase in doing righteous deeds and hope for the mercy of Allāh while fearing the punishment of Allāh, so that he combines between hope and fear.

We ask Allāh to give us all success in all that He loves and all that He is pleased with. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE THIRTEENTH SITTING

Warning Regarding the Plots of the Shayṭān Against the Children of Ādam

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَن لَّا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ ۖ
إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴾

Did I not ordain for you, O Children of Ādam, that you should not worship the Shayṭān (Satan)? Verily, he is a plain enemy to you.

[Sūrah Yā-Sīn 36:60]

This contains clarification of the enmity of Iblīs for Ādam and his progeny. This enmity is ancient, ongoing ever since Allāh created Ādam, the father of humanity, and bestowed upon him virtues and commanded the angels to prostrate to him. Iblīs was envious of him and his great status. This was by way of the virtue of Allāh (the Majestic and High). Iblīs said, “I am better than him.” He objected to Allāh’s command and disobeyed Allāh. The result was that Allāh cursed him and expelled him and removed him from His mercy. He lowered his position and made him to be cursed. [The Shayṭān] asked Allāh to grant him reprieve, saying to Him:

﴿ أَنظِرْنِي إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴾

“Allow me respite till the Day they are raised up (i.e., the Day of Resurrection).”

[Sūrah al-A’rāf 7:14]

Therefore, Allāh granted him respite until the Day that was appointed, whereupon he swore an oath by the might of Allāh that he would plot against this created being and his offspring, seeking to lead them astray and take them far away from their Lord; seeking to take them along with him to the Hellfire. Allāh ﷻ has said:

﴿ إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴾

Certainly, you shall have no authority over My slaves, except those who follow you of the *ghāwīn* (*mushrikūn* and those who go astray, criminals, polytheists, and evil-doers, etc.).

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:42]

So Allāh informed him that He will aid His believing servants, protect them from the Shayṭān, and He will not grant him authority over them. He will only have authority over those who follow him from those who are astray. This is the wisdom of Allāh ﷻ. He tests His slaves, yet He is able to destroy the Shayṭān and his army in one instant; but He tests His slaves and tries them in order to distinguish those who are good from those who are evil, and to distinguish the believer from the disbeliever and the hypocrite. This is a test and trial, and it is wisdom from Allāh ﷻ.

Therefore, in the creation of Iblīs and his existence, as well as his leading of some astray, lies great wisdom: were it not for this, the believer would not be distinguished from the disbeliever, the good would not be distinguished from the evil, and *al-walā'* (allegiance) and *al-barā'* (dissociation) would not be achieved nor would *jihād* in the path of Allāh.

Therefore, in his existence lie various benefits, although in his existence also lies harm for those who follow him. However, this is due to a benefit, and the benefit is great for the true believers. He has vowed to work hard and exert efforts to lead the children of Ādam astray, and according to his claim, he will lead the majority of them astray. He said:

> ﴿ ثُمَّ لَآتِيَنَّهُم مِّن بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ
> وَعَن شَمَائِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ﴾
>
> **"Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them as thankful ones (i.e., they will not be dutiful to You)."**
>
> *[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:17]*

However, Allāh has bestowed His favor upon His believing slaves by way of His protection and safeguarding them from their enemies. Therefore, he who has allegiance for Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, devotes himself to Allāh, and takes refuge with Allāh, Allāh will protect him. He who obeys His messengers, believes in His Books, and follows what Allāh has sent down, Allāh will protect him from the Shayṭān and He will not give [the Shayṭān] any way to overcome him. Allāh has said:

> ﴿ إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ
> الْغَاوِينَ ﴾
>
> **Certainly, you shall have no authority over My slaves, except those who follow you of the *ghāwīn***

(*mushrikūn* and those who go astray, criminals, polytheists, and evil-doers, etc.).

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:42]

All praise is due to Allāh. Allāh has taken his believing servants as friends and has taken it upon Himself to protect them, aid them, and safeguard them. However, this necessitates that the believer has great fear and that he takes precautions against the enemy, who has very many soldiers—devils amongst mankind and *jinn*—and he sends them out in order to lead the people astray and to divert them by way of doubts, desires, disbelief, and deviation. Therefore, this necessitates that one takes precautions against the enemy and that the person always seeks refuge with Allāh and fortifies himself; seeking refuge with Allāh, holding fast to the obedience of Allāh عز وجل, and staying far away from disobeying Him. And if he falls into an act of disobedience, then he has answered the call of the Shayṭān. And if he abandons disobedience and acts in obedience to Allāh, then he will be safe from the Shayṭān and Allāh will protect him from the Shayṭān. Therefore, the believer must take precautions and be fearful and take refuge with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and stay away from disobedience and prohibited matters.

He must do many acts of obedience and preserve the obligatory matters. It is not sufficient that a person says, "I seek refuge with Allāh from the accursed Shayṭān," saying this only with his tongue while he does not leave off evil actions and he stays persistent upon disobedience and sins. Seeking refuge with the tongue is not sufficient and does not benefit. If one seeks refuge with Allāh from the Shayṭān, then let him leave off the actions of the Shayṭān and let him stay far away from disobedience and sins. And (he must) repent to Allāh عز وجل from what has occurred from him, for nothing is more difficult on the Shayṭān than *tawbah* (repentance). When the believers repent, the Shayṭān expresses deep sorrow because his efforts were in vain and were wasted. He rejoices with sins and he rejoices when they fall into acts of disobedience. However, when they repent, they free themselves of him. Thus, he shows great regret and sorrow. Due to this, he says, "They have broken my back by way of seeking Allāh's forgiveness."

This is from the mercy of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. From the greatest of that which occurred to the Shayṭān from loss and misery was the sending of Muḥammad ﷺ. Indeed, by way of him, Allāh saved many from mankind and guided them to the Straight Path. And Islām continues—and for Allāh is the praise—to be clear and evident, and by way of it, Allāh guides and saves people from the Shayṭān. Therefore, the path is clear for he who wants success.

And we ask Allāh to give us all success in what He loves and is pleased with. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE FOURTEENTH SITTING

Fear of the Fire

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh.

To proceed:

Allāh ﷾ says:

﴿ فَمَن زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ﴾

And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:185]

Therefore, the danger of the Fire is tremendous because it is a fire that is surrounded by desirable things, and the souls incline towards desirable things, except those upon whom Allāh has mercy. The danger of the Fire is very great. Due to this, Allāh warns against it in His Book, and the Messenger ﷺ has warned against it. Allāh revealed to His Prophet, saying:

﴿ وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴾

And warn your tribe (O Muḥammad ﷺ) of near kindred.

[Sūrah ash-Shu'arā' 26:214]

He commanded him to warn the people in general and he commanded him to warn his family specifically. Warning is informing regarding a matter that should be feared. He ﷺ was intense in his warning against the Fire. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا
٧١ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَّنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ٧٢ ﴾

There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord, a decree which must be accomplished. Then We shall save those who used to fear Allāh and were dutiful to Him. And We shall leave the wrongdoers therein (humbled) to their knees (in Hell).

[Sūrah Maryam 19:71-72]

Hence, no one is saved from His Fire except the people of *taqwā*; and *at-taqwā* is righteous actions comprised of acting in accordance with what Allāh has made obligatory and abandoning what Allāh has prohibited, out of fear and hope. Therefore, no one is saved from this Fire except those who have *taqwā,* and those who do not have *taqwā* will not be saved from this Fire. Rather, they will be amongst the wrongdoers. Allāh has said:

﴿ وَّنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴾

And We shall leave the wrongdoers therein (humbled) to their knees (in Hell).

[Sūrah Maryam 19:72]

Hence, it is obligatory upon the Muslim to be cautious from this fire; and this is by way of enacting the means that will save him from it. As for merely having fear while the person is persistent upon disobedience and sins, this fear will not benefit. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

يا معشر قريش أو أنقذوا أنفسكم من النار يا عباس عم رسول الله لا أملك لك من الله شيئا ويا صفية عمة رسول الله لا أملك لك من الله شيئا ويا فاطمة بنت محمد سليني ما شئت من مالي لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا.

O assembly of Quraysh, save yourselves from the Fire. O 'Abbās, uncle of the Messenger of Allāh, I cannot avail you anything against Allāh; O Ṣafiyyah, aunt of the Messenger of Allāh, I cannot avail you anything against Allāh. O Fāṭimah, daughter of Muḥammad; take what you want from my wealth, for I cannot avail you anything against Allāh.[1]

Hence, mere relation to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ will not benefit them without righteous actions; only righteous actions will benefit them. Therefore, if this is the case of the relatives of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, then what do you think about other than them?!

It is obligatory upon the Muslim to save himself from the Fire; every person must save himself. No one can save another person. A father cannot save his children, and children cannot save their parents. A brother cannot save his brother and a relative cannot save his relative. This is (only) the case in the *dunyā*, where people in the *dunyā* cooperate in repelling what is harmful and mutually bearing each other's hardships, defending each other and protecting one another. As for in the Hereafter, no one can protect anyone else. Allāh has said:

﴿ يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلَّهِ ﴾

(It will be) the Day when no person shall have power (to do) anything for another, and the decision, that

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[1] Reported from al-Bukhāri (2753) and Muslim (206).

Day, will be (wholly) with Allāh.

[Sūrah al-Infiṭār 82:19]

Therefore, no soul can avail another. Everyone is responsible for himself—either he will save himself or bring about his own ruin; this is the end result for the people on the Day of Judgment. This fire will be presented to the people on the Day of Judgment; all of them will pass over it on the Ṣirāt. They will pass over it in proportion to their actions; therefore, no one will be saved from the Fire except the people of *taqwā*. Allāh has said:

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴾

There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord, a decree which must be accomplished.

[Sūrah Maryam 19:71]

This is in reference to passing over the Ṣirāt. Allāh said:

﴿ وَّنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴾

And We shall leave the wrongdoers therein (humbled) to their knees (in Hell).

[Sūrah Maryam 19:72]

Therefore, he who has righteous actions will pass over the Ṣirāt and he will be saved from the Hellfire, and he who does not have righteous actions will pass over the Ṣirāt but fall into the Hellfire. This is because he does not have anything that will carry him. Hence, the danger of the Hellfire is very great and its affair is tremendous. If a person comprehends this affair, then he knows that there is no avoiding it and that Allāh has informed him that it will occur, for He said:

﴿ وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴾

There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell);

this is with your Lord, a decree which must be accomplished.

[Sūrah Maryam 19:71]

And this is the informing of Allāh ﷻ and it is information that is certain from the Lord ﷻ and the address is to all of the creation. Allāh has said, "There is not one of you," meaning: all of the creation, and no one is an exception. All of them will pass over this Fire. Either his righteous actions will save him or he will fall into the Hellfire. Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ warned against this Fire in his sermons and admonitions and in his addresses to his Companions and his *ummah;* he would always warn against this Fire and say, "I warn you against a fire, save yourselves from the Fire."

He described this Fire, its depth and its distance. He ﷺ was sitting once amongst his Companions and they heard a loud sound; meaning, they heard the sound of something fall. He said to them:

أتدرون ما هذا؟

Do you know what this sound is?

They said, "Allāh and his Messenger know best." He said:

هذا حجر رمي به في جهنم منذ سبعين عاماً فالآن وصل إلى قعرها.

This is the sound of a stone that was tossed in the Hellfire 70 years ago and it just now hit the bottom.[2]

This is its depth and refuge is sought with Allāh; and it shall be filled on the Day of Judgment by way of the creation who lost themselves in this *dunyā* and wasted their lives and their time, and death came to them when they were not ready. They shall reach this Fire and they will be its inhabitants, and refuge is sought with Allāh. They will be its fuel. Every person is thus in danger because he does not know if he will be from those who are saved or from those who are destroyed.

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[2] Reported by Muslim (2844).

Therefore, how can a person be at ease and feel safe when he does not know if he will be saved or not? For this reason, the righteous from amongst the Salaf of this *ummah* were amazingly fearful and did an amazing amount of righteous actions out of fear of the Fire, because they believed with correct *īmān* and thus had fear. Therefore, they utilized the means that would bring about salvation before they died. Hence, he who wants to know how they were, let him read their history and their biographies.

However, was the Hellfire only created for them? The Hellfire was created for all of the sinners amongst the children of Ādam, from the beginning of the creation to its end. So why were the pious predecessors fearful to this extent and why did they do these tremendous righteous actions, while we are in this evil state of negligence and lack of fear, drowning in the affairs of the *dunyā*? Rather, the affair has reached the point that some abandon the obligations; and at the head of them are the five obligatory prayers. A large portion of the people do not safeguard them while they are the children of the Muslims, in the lands of the Muslims; yet, they do not safeguard the prayers. So what about other than it? How will they safeguard other than it? How can they feel safe from this Fire? Refuge is sought with Allāh. However, when the hearts are blocked and become heedless, the sins become easy and thus they become blind such that they do not hear or see. Allāh has said:

﴿ كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴾

Nay! But on their hearts is the *rān* (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they used to earn.

[Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn 83:14]

And we ask Allāh for safety and security. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

THE FIFTEENTH SITTING

The Obligation of Having Sincerity in One's Actions for Allāh

All praise is due to Allāh. May prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

Indeed, for actions to be accepted, there are two conditions.

The First Condition: Sincerity for the sake of Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. This is by one intending by way of the action the Face of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. As for if one's action is not sincere, then it will not be accepted; such as if the action contains the association of partners with Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, then Allāh will not accept the action. Allāh will only accept what is sincere for his noble Face. As for that which contains *shirk,* it will be rejected and Allāh will not accept it. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا
يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴾

So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a

partner in the worship of his Lord.

[Sūrah al-Kahf 18:110]

It is mentioned as well in the Ḥadīth Qudsi that Allāh (the Majestic and High) has said:

أنا أغنى الشركاء عن الشرك من عمل عملاً أشرك معي فيه غيري تركته وشركه.

I am the least in need of partners to be associated with me. Therefore, he who does an action in which he associated with me other than me, I will abandon him and his *shirk*.[1]

In another narration:

فهو للذي أشرك وأنا منه بريء.

Then he will be left to what he has associated as a partner with Me and I am free of him.

This is the same whether that *shirk* is major or minor, such as showing off and seeking reputation. Therefore, he who does an action in order to show off—meaning, so that the people will see him and thus commend and praise him for it—this is showing off and the action will not reach Allāh. Rather, the action will not go beyond the one who does it. Therefore, if one does an action so that the people will hear about it, then this is seeking reputation. Seeking reputation is called such due to what the people hear from sounds or words, from remembrance and other than it. And Allāh knows what is within the heart. Therefore, if He knows that the objective behind this action is other than Allāh, then Allāh will not accept it.

Due to this, it is obligatory upon the servant to make his actions sincere for Allāh and to stay far away from showing off and seeking reputation. He must conceal his actions as much as he can; hiding his actions to keep them between himself and Allāh whenever possible, except for the actions for which displaying them is legislated, such as praying along with the congregation and *jihād* in the path of Allāh, for these are not done except in the open. However, it is upon the person to make his intention pure for Allāh ﷿. Due to this, there has come in the *ḥadīth*:

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[1] Reported by Muslim (2985).

إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى، فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله ورسوله، فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله، ومن كانت هجرته لدنيا يصيبها أو امرأة ينكحها، فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه.

Actions are only by the intentions and everyone shall be rewarded according to what he intended. So he whose immigration is for Allāh and his Messenger, then his immigration is for Allāh and his Messenger; he whose immigration was to obtain a portion of the *dunyā* or for a woman he hoped to marry, then his immigration is for whatever he migrated for.[2]

Therefore, the affairs are in accordance with the objectives behind them. Hence, it is upon the Muslim to make his intentions good and to purify his objectives. If he senses any self-amazement or showing off, then it is upon him to seek Allāh's forgiveness, repent to Allāh, and purify the action for Allāh, and his intention should not be to gain commendation and praise from the people. Rather, it is upon him to always purify every action he does, to struggle against his soul, and to stay far away from the love of praise, the love of commendation, and the love of veneration from the people. He must act sincerely, seeking the Face of Allāh. Otherwise, his action will wear him out but bring about no benefit.

The Second Condition for the acceptance of righteous action is that it must be correct in accordance with the Sunnah of the Messenger ﷺ, far removed from innovation, newly invented matters, and superstitions which Allāh has sent down no authority for. Therefore, one should not take to the customs of the people.

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[2] Reported by Muslim (2985).

Rather, it is upon him to follow the evidences from the Book and the Sunnah. That which the evidence from the Book and the Sunnah of the Messenger ﷺ confirms, then he draws near to Allāh by way of it and worships Allāh with it. This is because Allāh sent to us a Messenger ﷺ to clarify to the people what Allāh ﷻ has legislated, to clarify to them what will draw them near to Allāh, to clarify the actions that Allāh loves and is pleased with, and to prohibit them from innovations and newly invented matters. Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ said:

من عمل عملا ليس عليه أمرنا فهو رد.

Whoever does an action that is not from this affair of ours, it shall be rejected.[3]

Meaning, it shall be rejected and returned to him. It will not be accepted nor will it be raised to Allāh ﷻ. This is because Allāh did not legislate it. Even if one's intention is purely for the sake of Allāh, if the action has not been legislated, then the action that Allāh did not legislate will not be accepted by Allāh. Therefore, Allāh cannot be worshiped except with what He has legislated upon the tongue of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. So one must be, in his actions, following the guidance of the Messenger ﷺ. Due to this, the Messenger ﷺ said:

إن خير الحديث كتاب الله وخير الهدي هدي محمد وشر الأمور محدثاتها وكل بدعة ضلالة وكل ضلالة في النار.

Indeed, the best speech is the Book of Allāh and the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad and the worst of all matters are the newly invented matters; every newly invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is a deviation and every deviation is in the Hellfire.[4]

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[3] Reported by al-Bukhāri (1) and Muslim (1907).

[4] Reported by al-Bukhāri in "The Book of Holding Fast to the Sunnah" and by Muslim (1718).

He ﷺ likewise said:

فعليكم بسنتي، وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين عضوا عليها بالنواجذ،
وإياكم ومحدثات الأمور، فإن كل بدعة ضلالة.

Upon you is my Sunnah and the *sunnah* of the rightly guided upright caliphs after me. Hold fast to it and bite on to it with your molar teeth; and beware of newly invented matters, for indeed, every newly invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance.[5]

Therefore, it is not permissible to act upon innovation, no matter what it may be, even if many people are practicing it and they beautify it, deem it to be good, and claim that it is obedience and will draw one near to Allāh. As long as there is no evidence for it from the Book and the Sunnah, and the Messenger ﷺ did not do it nor did he command with it, and it is not from the guidance of the rightly guided caliphs, then it is an innovation and misguidance and it will not draw one near to Allāh ﷻ. Rather, it will take one further away from Allāh, and Allāh (the Majestic and High) is not pleased with it nor does He love it nor will he accept it. This is because it is outside of His legislation and His religion.

Therefore, the innovators are astray and they act upon other than guidance from the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ and they are not followers of the Messenger ﷺ. They are only followers of their desires and followers of the devils from amongst mankind and the *jinn* who invent for them these innovations and beautify them for them. Goodness, blessing, and sufficiency lies in what Allāh has legislated, for the one whom Allāh grants success. Indeed, Allāh has not left us to our own intellects nor has He left us to ourselves. He has not left us to the actions, customs, and blind following of the people. Rather, He has sent down to us a Book and He has sent to us a Messenger, and He has legislated a path for us to traverse upon. Due to this, there has come to us at the end of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah:

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[5] Reported by Muslim (867).

﴿ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝٥ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
۝٦ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝٧ ﴾

You (alone) we worship, and You (alone) we ask for help (for each and every thing). Guide us to the Straight Way. The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians).

[Sūrah al-Fātiḥah 1:5-7]

This is a supplication with which the Muslim supplicates in every *rak'ah* from his prayer, and it is a tremendous supplication. You are asking Allāh to guide you to the Straight Path, to make you firm upon it, to aid you in traversing upon it, and to keep you away from the path of those with whom He is angry—those who have knowledge but do not act upon it, so that they disobeyed Allāh upon clear insight. Likewise, the path of those who are astray, and they are those who act but do not have guidance nor evidence. They are not acting upon what Allāh has legislated. Therefore, they are astray, wandering blindly and they are not upon a clear path. They are only in a state of destruction, following the whims of their souls without any evidence.

This is an example for everyone who does an action that Allāh has not legislated: no matter what he takes upon himself to do and no matter how good his intentions are and how sound his objectives are—the action that one performs which is not legislated, then Allāh is not pleased with it. Allāh is only pleased with what He has legislated. Allāh has perfected for us our religion and He has not left any room for anyone to bring what they deem to be good. Rather, the religion has been perfected and is not in need of addition or subtraction.

The Messenger ﷺ did not die until Allāh perfected by way of him the religion and completed by way of him His favor. Therefore, he who desires good and success must cling to this religion without adding to it or taking anything away from it, so that he may be upon the path of those whom Allāh bestowed his favor upon, from the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous. These are excellent companions.

Today, the people of innovation are active in spreading books and distributing articles, giving sermons and speaking, and they spread innovation and call to it and they chase people away from the Sunnah. They have satanic activities and their danger is severe. We ask Allāh for safety. Therefore, it is upon us to beware of them and their evil, and to ask Allāh for success and guidance, to aid us in traversing upon the Straight Path, and to not allow us to be deceived by them and their innovations.

May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

THE SIXTEENTH SITTING

The Virtue of Maintaining the Masjid

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. May the salutation of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions collectively.

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ ۖ فَعَسَىٰ
أُولَٰئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴾

The *masājid* of Allāh are only maintained by those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, establish the prayer, give *zakāh,* and fear none but Allāh. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:18]

The *masājid* are the houses of Allāh. He connected them to Himself in His statement:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَن يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ ﴾

And who is more unjust than those who forbid the *masājid* of Allāh, that His name be glorified and mentioned therein?

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:114]

He connected them to Himself as a way of honor and nobility, as they are the noblest of places and the most beloved places to Allāh the Exalted.

Maintaining the *masjid* is of two categories:

1) To maintain the *masjid* with clay and building materials; and this is not the goal, but rather a means to the goal.

2) This category is the actual goal, and it is to maintain the *masjid* by obedience and remembrance of Allāh. For this reason, Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ ﴾

The *masājid* of Allāh are only maintained by those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, establish the prayer, and give *zakāh*.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:18]

Thus, its maintenance was restricted to these actions because this is the goal and the purpose. The purpose for building a *masjid* is not to boast or show off, and it is not about its "architectural design" (as they call it) or its Islamic art. None of these matters have any value or significance. If this is someone's intention, then they are not considered to be from the maintainers of the *masjid*. As for building the *masjid* and spending to build it seeking the Face of Allāh, to help the Muslims, and to give them a safe haven to perform their worship, then this is a good intention and a righteous action. And it comes in the *ḥadīth:*

مَنْ بَنَى لِلَّهِ مَسْجِدًا بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ.

Whoever builds for Allāh a *masjid*, Allāh will build for them a home in Paradise.[1]

Pay attention to His statement: "builds for Allāh." Thus, the intention must be to seek the Face of Allāh the Exalted, and the purpose must be the Face of Allāh, not to boast or to receive praise, commendation, or memorialization, as they call it. All of these actions are invalid, regardless of how much wealth is spent.

As for building a *masjid* sincerely for Allāh, then this is from the best actions. This is the person for whom Allāh will build a home in Paradise. [This is the case] even if it is not extravagant and elaborate, but it is a place where the Muslims can seek shelter, although it may be humble. The *masjid* of the Prophet ﷺ was the best *masjid* other than Masjid al-Ḥarām. And it was the first *masjid* built upon piety along with Masjid Qubā'. And both of them were built with rocks and date-tree trunks. It pillars were from the trunks of date trees, while its walls were built from stones, and its roof was built from date-palm branches and leaves. This was the *masjid* of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. When it rained, the water would descend to the floor and the floor of the *masjid* would become mud. Despite all of this, it is the best *masjid* other than Masjid al-Ḥarām. And prayer in the Prophet's *masjid* is a thousand times greater than any other *masjid,* other than Masjid al-Ḥarām.[2] And this is based upon the intention for building it, and that was sincerely for the Face of Allāh the Exalted.

Thus, the consideration is not given to the durability of its structure, its decorations, or its glitter. The consideration is only given to the intention and purpose for building. But if a good building is combined with a good intention, then there is no doubt that this is better and longer lasting for generations of Muslims to pray therein. Therefore, if a strong structure is combined with a righteous intention, there is no doubt that this is good on good, but all of this is based on the intention.

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[1] Collected by an-Nasā'i (1577).

[2] **Translator's Note**: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, "One prayer in my *masjid* is better than a thousand prayers elsewhere, except Masjid al-Ḥarām, and one prayer in Masjid al-Ḥarām is better than a hundred thousand prayers elsewhere." *Sunan Ibn Majāh* 1406.

Contemplate Masjid aḍ-Ḍirār,[3] built by the hypocrites; it had the appearance of a *masjid*, and those who built it swore they only intended good. Despite this, Allāh the Exalted commanded His Prophet to destroy it and burn it. And He prohibited him from praying in it.

﴿ لَا تَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَدًا ﴾

Do not stand [for prayer] within it—ever.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:108]

Why? This is because the intention of those who built it was an evil intention. And with Allāh refuge is sought. The reason they built this *masjid* was:

﴿ مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا وَتَفْرِيقًا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَادًا
لِّمَنْ حَارَبَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ﴾

A *masjid* by way of harming and disbelief, and to disunite the believers, and as an outpost for those who warred against Allāh and His Messenger.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:107]

This was their intention; thus, this was from the evilest of buildings.

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[3] **Translator's Note**: Allāh the Exalted said:

> And as for those who put up a *masjid* by way of harming and disbelief, and to disunite the believers, and as an outpost for those who warred against Allāh and His Messenger aforetime, they will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good. Allāh bears witness that they are certainly liars.
>
> [Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:107]

The command was given to destroy it, burn it, and remove it. And the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ fulfilled the command of his Lord; thus, he destroyed and burned it.

In summary: Building *masājid* is from the greatest actions if the intention is good and sincere. And it is a means, and the goal is the remembrance of Allāh the Exalted, worshiping Him therein, and to give the worshipers a safe haven to pray away from the heat, cold, and rain so they will have tranquility in their prayer and worship. This place is for the worship of Allāh, teaching beneficial actions, beneficial lessons, establishing the prayer, and paying the *zakāh,* and so it can be a radiant light in the land and in that part of the city. This is how the *masājid* are. The *masājid* have sacredness, and they have a lofty status and great significance. They are the best places, so it is obligatory to exalt them, protect them, and respect them.

No evil manners should take place in the *masājid*, the voices should not be raised, and it should not be made a place for worldly conversations. It is only a place for remembrance of Allāh the Exalted. It must be purified from filth, bad odors, and that which is unsightly so it can be in the best condition. It should be fragranced with *bakhūr* and scents to give it a nice smell. Those who go to the *masjid* should clean themselves with nice clothes and good smells. They should avoid eating garlic, onions, and smoking cigarettes. They should go to the *masājid* in the best condition, because they are the houses of Allāh and the places of worship, and the places in which the Muslims gather.

Likewise, the *masājid* are the places of the angels. The angels of mercy descend from the heavens to the *masājid*. Thus, the *masājid* are the places for remembrance of Allāh and worship of Him.

﴿ فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ
لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ (٣٦) رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا
بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ ۙ يَخَافُونَ

يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ ۝٣٧ ﴾

In houses *(masājid)*, which Allāh has ordered to be raised and in them His name is mentioned and glorified in the mornings and in the afternoons or the evenings, [are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allāh, establishing the prayer, and giving of *zakāh*. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will be turned in horror.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:36-37]

They return to it five times during the day and night, while some of them spend the night without leaving. Thus, they remain therein night and day or most of the day. It is never void of those worshiping Allāh, even if the worshipers are from the angels. It is never empty of residents who are worshiping Allāh, magnifying Him and glorifying His name. Therefore, it is a place of good; they are homes of goodness and the noblest places on earth.

Consequently, the Muslim respects the *masājid*. He goes there for the five daily prayers and worship; each time he leaves the *masjid* for work and business, he returns to it. This is because he finds in the *masjid* ease, sweetness, and happiness. He finds the remembrance of Allāh and he connects with his Lord through worship and *du'ā'*. He stands before Him in one of the houses of Allāh; thus, it is the place that brings coolness to his eyes.

There is a narration that mentions seven types of people who will be shaded in the shade of Allāh,[4] and from them is:

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[4] **Translator's Note**: "There are seven whom Allāh will shade with His shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His: the just ruler, a young man who grows up worshiping his Lord, a man whose heart is attached to the *masjid*, two men who love one another for the sake of Allāh and meet and part on that basis, a man who is called by a woman of rank and beauty and says 'I fear Allāh,' a man who gives in charity and conceals it to such an extent that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives, and a man who remembers Allāh when he is alone and his eyes fill up." *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1031.

رَجُلٌ قَلْبُهُ مُعَلَّقٌ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ.

A man whose heart is connected to the *masājid*.[5]

He loves the *masjid*, he connects himself to it, he returns to it often, and he is not detached from it. These are the attributes of a Muslim as it relates to the houses of Allāh. But—and with Allāh refuge is sought—what is with those people who live next to the *masjid* but do not enter it?! They don't enter the *masjid* during the day or the night. They go the entire year or most of the year without entering the *masjid*. They might not enter the *masjid* until the funeral prayer when the people are praying over them after they die, although it is incumbent to not pray over them, because they did not establish the prayer. And whoever purposely abandons the prayer is a disbeliever and should not be prayed over. But the Muslims are unaware of their condition and they have a good thought about them.

In summary: This is a great loss—we ask Allāh for safety and security. They live beside the *masjid* and the *masjid* is filled with cars, and they hear the *adhān* but they do not attend the prayer. And they do not obey Allāh and His Messenger, and they do not answer the call of the one calling them to Allāh the Exalted! What will their condition be? And with Allāh refuge is sought. There is no might or power except with Allāh. We ask Allāh for safety and security. We ask Allāh to favor us and them with repentance, because the door of repentance is open and we do not despair from the mercy of Allāh.

But we say: If they continue upon this path, then their affair is evil; and if they repent, Allāh will accept their repentance. This is because Allāh accepts the repentance of those who repent.

May the salutations and peace of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions collectively.

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[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1031

THE SEVENTEENTH SITTING

The Virtue of Tarāwīḥ Prayer & Tahajjud During the Month of Ramaḍān

All praises belong to Allāh, and may salutations and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh.

To proceed:

Tarāwīḥ prayer is from the special acts of worship particular to the month of Ramaḍān. And it is a confirmed Sunnah; rather, it is the most confirmed Sunnah. The Prophet ﷺ established it with his Companions during the nights of Ramaḍān. He prayed it and they prayed it behind him. Then he did not lead them in this prayer the next night, fearing it would become obligatory upon them. This is because if the Prophet ﷺ had constantly prayed it and did not leave it, it would have become obligatory. Therefore, he stopped leading them in Tarāwīḥ prayer so they would know it was not obligatory; rather, it is a confirmed Sunnah. And it is from the special acts during the month of Ramaḍān.

Tarāwīḥ prayer starts the first night, and when the last 10 nights arrive, they increase by praying Tahajjud during the last part of the night, to complete staying up at night. During the first 20 nights of

Ramaḍān, the Prophet ﷺ would pray and sleep, and when the last 10 nights came:

كان إذا دخل العشر الأواخر أحيا الليل وأيقظ أهله وشد المئزر.

When the last 10 days of Ramaḍān came, he would stay up at night and wake his family up, and he would abstain from marital relations.[1]

In summary: Tarāwīḥ prayer is a confirmed Sunnah which is prayer in congregation in the *masājid*. It is not befitting for the Muslim to stay away from it or abandon it, because in doing so he will miss a great deal of good. This is based upon the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا, غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during Ramaḍān, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[2]

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during the Night of Qadr, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[3]

The Night of Qadr is not specified as any particular night; rather, it is possible that any of the nights could be the Night of Qadr. Thus, if the person stands in prayer all the nights of Ramaḍān, then he is guaranteed to have caught the Night of Qadr. If he prays each night during the month of Ramaḍān, then he will have prayed during the Night of Qadr. And the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَامَ مَعَ الإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كُتِبَ لَهُ قِيَامُ لَيْلَةٍ.

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[1] *Sunan an-Nasā'i* 1639

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1031

[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2024

Whoever stands in prayer with the *imām* until he leaves will be written among those who prayed the night prayer.[4]

This will encourage the Muslim to attend Tarāwīḥ prayer from the beginning to the end each night of Ramaḍān, and Tahajjud during the last 10 nights of Ramaḍān, so he may receive this great reward. He must not prevent himself from this reward that he is in dire need of in order to increase his good deeds and remove his sins.

Many of the Salaf—due to their striving in righteous deeds—would not leave off Tarāwīḥ prayer and Tahajjud with the *imām* because they understood its reward. Thus, they would pray Tarāwīḥ, and during the last part of the night, they would pray Tahajjud. It has been narrated that they would increase the length of their standing during these prayers to the extent that they would have to lean on a stick. And they would tie ropes to pillars and to themselves due to the long standing. They would not leave until the time for Fajr. They remained so long they feared they would miss the meal before fasting. This was all from their diligence in attaining the good from this month, although they would strive hard the entire year; may Allāh be pleased with them.

As for us, we have many shortcomings and a great deal of laziness during the entire year. If we follow the month of Ramaḍān with laziness during the other months, then what have we benefited? Therefore, it is necessary for the Muslim to not miss out on these nights. And during these times, Tarāwīḥ prayer is light and the number of *raka'āt* is small; all of this is to encourage the people to attend the *masjid*. But despite this, many people stay away. This is due to the people being heedless. What benefit will the person gain by abandoning Tarāwīḥ prayer and Tahajjud and then going off to "he said, she said" or seeking the worldly pleasures? What benefit will this bring to his life?

In front of him is the Paradise, the Hellfire, and the Judgment. In front of him is danger and destruction of the scales, which weigh down to an atom's weight. In front of him are the scrolls of deeds which have recorded all of his actions. He shall be given his book of deeds on the Day of Judgment and he will read it himself and judge himself with it. There is a great deal of danger which lies ahead of man, and ahead of him is destruction. So how can he sleep and be heedless? How can he squander this great season which Allāh has made to remove his sins and transgressions, and to remove him from the Fire if he preserves this month?! If he wastes this month and follows his desires and is heedless, then he has lost himself. Whomsoever Allāh destroys, then he is truly destroyed.

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[4] Collected by at-Tirmidhi (806); also narrated by Abū Dāwūd (1375), an-Nasā'i (1605), and Ibn Mājah (1327).

We ask Allāh the Exalted to grant us success in all righteous actions, statements, actions, and sincerity. We ask that He does not prevent us or you from the benefits of this month and the other months and from righteous actions.

And may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions collectively.

THE EIGHTEENTH SITTING

The Virtue of Fasting

All praises belong to Allāh, and may salutations and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh.

To proceed:

It has been authenticated from the Prophet ﷺ from what he narrated from his Lord the Exalted—and this type is called Ḥadīth Qudsi—that Allāh the Exalted said:

الصَّوْمُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ.

Fasting is from Me and I shall reward for it.[1]

This is from the virtues of fasting as it relates to the other good deeds; Allāh specified fasting for Himself. He said, "Fasting is for Me." As for the other good deeds, then they are for the worshiper; they bring the worshiper closer to Allāh the Exalted, but they will be exposed to being taken away by those who were oppressed by the worshiper. If a person has some unpaid debts and creditors, his creditors will come and take his wealth until he has nothing left with him except food for himself and his children. He may become poor and destitute due to the creditors taking his wealth, even if he had a great deal of wealth prior to this. If his wealth is less than his debts or equal to his debts, the creditors will take it until nothing remains; thus, he will become poor after he was rich. This is what happens in this life.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1761; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1946

Likewise, in the next life, people will come with good deeds the likes of huge mountains, but people that they oppressed will come forward. They took this person's money, they hit this person, they insulted this person; thus, those who were oppressed will take from their good deeds. This person will come and take their good deeds and that person will come and take their good deeds, until the person has no good deeds left. Consequently, he will be thrown into the Hellfire because he does not have any good deeds to enter him into Paradise. He will become destitute of good deeds. He came with a mountain of good deeds, but they all went to his creditors.

As for fasting, then Allāh will store it away for the worshiper because it belongs to Allāh. So He will store it for the worshiper, reward him for it, and enter him into Paradise for it. This is proof for the virtue of fasting.

Another explanation of this *ḥadīth* has been mentioned. The good deeds are multiplied from 10 times up to 700 times, as Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِّائَةُ
حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ﴾

As the likeness of a grain (of corn); it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. And Allāh multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:261]

One grain grows into 700 grains. This is similar for the good deed.

Allāh multiplies one good deed until it becomes 700 good deeds. From Allāh's virtue and mercy, He may increase it to more than 700. "And Allāh multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills."

As for fasting, then its multiplying is not limited to a number; rather, no one knows its reward except Allāh. Fasting is the exception to all the other good deeds in this regard. The good deeds are multiplied from 10 up to 700 or even more than that. But as it relates to fasting, it is not limited to any number, because fasting is a form of patience. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:10]

The status of patience is great and patience is: patience upon the obedience of Allāh, patience in avoiding what Allāh has prohibited, and patience with the decree of Allāh. For this reason, the reward for patience is tremendous. No one knows its reward except Allāh the Exalted. Patience is mentioned in the Qur'ān in more than 70 places, because no one is granted patience except the one whom Allāh has given success in attaining it. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴾

But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion.

[Sūrah Fuṣṣilat 41:35]

Fasting contains all three types of patience. Fasting is patience upon the obedience of Allāh. The person fasts in obedience to the command of Allāh, so he leaves his desires and pleasures and he restrains himself upon Allāh's obedience.

Likewise, fasting is patience in avoiding the prohibitions of Allāh. The fasting person prevents his soul from all the impermissible things. He prevents his soul and refrains it from what is prohibited as long as he is fasting. It is not befitting for him to speak impermissible speech, do impermissible actions, look at the impermissible, or listen to what is impermissible. Rather, he restrains his soul from all impermissible actions, whether connected to the tongue or the limbs. This is because he knows these impermissible actions will harm his fasting, so he completely refrains his soul. And few people are granted success in this.

And fasting is patience with the painful decree of Allāh. This decree is the hunger and thirst the fasting person suffers. And there is no doubt the person is pained by hunger and pained by thirst while he is fasting. But he is patient with these harms because he knows it is from the decree of Allāh. He is patient until the time to break the fast arrives. Sometimes, the time for breaking the fasting arrives very late, if the day is long. And there is a great reward in this because he abandoned food and drink and was patient with the harm for the sake of Allāh the Exalted. As a result, Allāh the Exalted will bestow upon him a tremendous reward without any reckoning on the Day of Judgment.

Those who fasted in this life will be given their reward on the Day of Judgment without reckoning; as for the other actions, they will be exposed to reckoning. Some of the good deeds will be multiplied by 10, some by 700, some more, and some less. As for fasting, then there is no limit to how much it will be multiplied. This is for those who safeguard their fast from those actions that harm the fast, and for those who seek the reward of Allāh the Exalted by fasting.

Likewise, what is mentioned in this noble verse:

﴿ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴾

Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent

on before you in days past!

[Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah 69:24]

It has been said that this verse was revealed concerning those who fast, those who prevented themselves in the life of this world from their desires by fasting and they were patient with that. On the Day of Judgment, it will be said to them:

﴿ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴾

Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent on before you in days past!

[Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah 69:24]

This means: for what you have put forth in days past, the fast that you fasted in the worldly life that prevented you from food and drink. It will be said to them: "Now, eat and drink at ease." This is because the reward received is similar to the action performed. Thus, because they prevented their souls in this world from their desires and were patient with hunger and thirst in obedience to Allāh the Exalted, He will compensate them on the Day of Judgment.

﴿ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴾

Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent on before you in days past!

[Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah 69:24]

This means because of what you did in previous days, during the worldly life. This will be specific to those who fasted. It will be said to them, "Eat and drink." When the people are standing at the gathering (on the Day of Judgment) hungry, thirsty, and confined, they will be eating and drinking upon their tables.

﴿ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ﴾

Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent

on before you in days past!

[Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah 69:24]

This is from the virtue of fasting and the virtue of those who fast. They will be distinguished on the Day of Judgment from others with this glad tiding. Similarly, those who migrated in the path of Allāh and left their lands, their wealth, and their children for the sake of Allāh the Exalted, fleeing with their religion; Allāh will compensate them with a homeland greater than the homeland they had in the worldly life and houses greater than their houses from the worldly life, in Paradise.

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِي
الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ وَلَأَجْرُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

And as for those who emigrated for the cause of Allāh after suffering oppression, We will certainly give them good residence in this world, but indeed the reward of the Hereafter will be greater, if they but knew!

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:41]

And the Exalted said:

﴿ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ فَإِيَّايَ فَاعْبُدُونِ
﴿٥٦﴾ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرِي
مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ نِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾
الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾

O My slaves who believe! Certainly, spacious is My earth. Therefore, worship Me (alone). Everyone shall taste death. Then unto Us you shall be returned. And those who believe and do righteous

> **good deeds, to them We shall surely give lofty dwellings in Paradise, underneath which rivers flow, to live therein forever. Excellent is the reward of the workers; those who are patient and put their trust in their Lord.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-'Ankabūt 29:56-59]*

When they left their homes, their lands, their wealth, and their children and fled, migrating in the path of Allāh, Allāh compensated them with lofty homes, and He compensated them in the worldly life with a land better than their land. This occurred with those who migrated with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Allāh compensated them with *ṭayyibah aṭ-ṭayyibah* (al-Madīnah). They were accommodated with spacious homes, and they were safe therein with their religion, and there they were Companions to their Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. In the next life, Allāh has promised them lofty homes in everlasting gardens. This is proof that whoever leaves something for the sake of Allāh, Allāh will compensate them with something better.

May Allāh grant us all success in what He loves and is pleased with, and may the salutations and peace of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions collectively.

THE NINETEENTH SITTING

Some Descriptions of Paradise

All praises belong to Allāh. May salutations and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh.

There has come in the Noble Qur'ān descriptions of Paradise and the eternal bliss, happiness, and enjoyment therein. Allāh the Exalted mentions the descriptions of Paradise in the Noble Qur'ān, and the Prophet ﷺ also mentions some of its descriptions. But that which Allāh and His Messenger did not mention is so much greater. This is because the intellect of the human is not able to conceive or comprehend what is inside Paradise. If you speak about it, you will still not be able to picture it. Allāh only mentions some of its description along with some of the known things in this world as a comparison.

Whatever this worldly life contains from enjoyment, happiness, delightful scents, beautiful sites, rivers, trees, fruits, and the water and drinks—all which is known to man from the delights of this world—Allāh mentions a comparison in Paradise. He mentions the date palm trees, the grapes, and He mentions the rivers. He mentions a comparison for all the things that delight man and bring them enjoyment. Allāh mentions the sweet-scented plants, the beautiful homes, and the attractive spouses, but He negated the deficiencies that occur to the delights of this world, such as how they change over time and cease to exist. The enjoyments of this world change; its trees dry out, its rivers run dry. Everything in this world comes to an end, while that which lies in Paradise will never ever come to an end.

He mentions the youth and strength the inhabitants of Paradise will possess and He negates what opposes this, such as old age and sickness. He mentions the happiness, contentment, and satisfaction the inhabitants of Paradise will experience while negating what removes this happiness and satisfaction in this world, such as worries and grief. He removed death from Paradise, that thing which comes to the inhabitants of this world; thus they die, and their remnants are removed from the world.

There is no sickness in Paradise, no worries, no sadness, and no death. There are no arguments or disputes between the inhabitants of Paradise; rather, Allāh will remove all traces of rancor from their hearts. As a result, they will all be brothers upon happiness, having social interaction with one another and bringing joy to one another. They will be united without any hatred or animosity. There will be no jealousy in Paradise, no transgression, and no hostility. This is in contrast to this world, which is filled with hatred, transgression, and animosity amongst the people. The inhabitants of Paradise will be free of this.

﴿ وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ
مُّتَقَابِلِينَ ﴾

And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment, [so they will be] brothers, on thrones facing each other.

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:47]

That which Allāh has hidden from the pleasures of Paradise is far greater (than what has been mentioned). This is because the mind of a human cannot perceive it, even if it was mentioned to him and described. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for their eyes (joy) as reward for what they used to do.

[Sūrah as-Sajdah 32:17]

This Paradise is not obtained by wishing; rather, it is only obtained by the mercy of Allāh the Exalted, by way of righteous actions which draw the worshiper close to Allāh. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

Enter Paradise because of (the good deeds) you used to do.

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:32]

There is shade in Paradise and there is no sun that would cause the people to be hot and there is no cold that would cause them to freeze.

﴿ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا ﴾

In it (Paradise), they will see neither the excessive heat of the sun nor the excessive bitter cold.

[Sūrah al-Insān 76:13]

In Paradise, there is extended shade that never runs out. The inhabitants of Paradise will be in shaded places of which the description is only known to Allāh the Exalted. In this world, the people are happy with good weather and the pleasant weather during springtime. During the summer months, they travel from place to place fleeing from the heat and seeking pleasant weather. During the winter months, they flee from the cold to a warmer climate. Thus, this world is a loathsome, miserable abode. There is nothing in it pure and uncontaminated. As for Paradise, it is pure, unblemished, and free from every type of contamination. It is free from every changing or spoiling. This is Paradise and some of its descriptions. And that which Allāh has kept hidden is far greater and only known to Allāh the Exalted. The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ فِي الجنةِ مَا لا عَيْنٌ رَأَتْ وَلا أُذُنٌ سَمِعَتْ وَلا خَطَرَ عَلَى قَلْبِ بَشَرٍ.

Verily, there is in Paradise that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and that which has never crossed the heart of man.[1]

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for their eyes (joy) as reward for what they used to do.

[Sūrah as-Sajdah 32:17]

But they only obtained this bliss and happiness because of the righteous actions they used to do.

﴿ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

Enter Paradise because of (the good deeds) you used to do.

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:32]

Paradise is not obtained through laziness and wishing; rather, it is only obtained through striving, hard work, and righteous actions. Allāh has made it for the doers of good.

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[1] Collected by al-Bukhāri (3244) and Muslim (2824).

﴿ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ ﴾

Peace be upon you! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein.

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:73]

﴿ الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۙ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمُ
ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

Those whose souls the angels take while they are in a pious state (they say to them), "Peace be on you; enter you Paradise, because of (the good) which you used to do."

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:32]

Paradise is good and wholesome and the abode for those who are good and wholesome, the origin of which is righteous deeds. These are those individuals who took advantage of their lives in this world and prepared for their Hereafter. They put forward righteous actions and repented to Allāh from sins and transgressions. Thus, they left the world with righteous actions and sincere repentance; these are the inhabitants of Paradise.

As for those individuals who are lazy and sluggish and hope for Allāh's mercy without having put forward actions, then this will not result in anything. As the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ بَطَّأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ.

Whoever is slowed down by his actions will not be hastened along based upon his lineage.[2]

Whoever is slowed by his actions—meaning, his actions hold him back and he does not have any actions to enter him into Paradise—he will not be hastened along due to his lineage. He will not be hastened because he is from such-and-such tribe, or because he is from the tribe of Quraysh or Banī Hāshim, or from a noble Arab tribe. None of this will have any benefit in front of Allāh. The only thing that will benefit in front of Allāh is righteous actions, even if the person was not from a famous lineage. Allāh the Exalted said:

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[2] Collected by Muslim (2699).

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴾

Verily, the most noble of you in the sight of Allāh are the most pious of you.

[Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt 49:13]

And the Exalted said:

﴿ فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا
يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ
﴿١٠٢﴾ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ
فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ ﴾

Then, when the trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that day, nor will they ask of one another. Then, those whose scales (of good deeds) are heavy—these, they are the successful. And those whose scales (of good deeds) are light, they are those who lose their souls, in Hell will they abide.

[Sūrah al-Mu'minūn 23:101-103]

In the next life, they will not look towards lineage, wealth, status, or children; rather, only one thing will be considered, and that is righteous actions which will benefit the person in front of Allāh the Exalted. Faith and righteous actions will benefit in front of Allāh the Exalted. Likewise, no one will benefit because of good deeds performed by their relatives, parents, or children. Meaning, a person will not be able to say, "I am the father of so-and-so, or I am from the people of so-and-so." The only thing that will benefit him is his own good deeds. He will not benefit from the actions of another even if they are the closest of relatives.

Ibrāhīm ﵇ is the best of all the inhabitants of Paradise, with the exception of our Prophet ﷺ, while his father is in the Hellfire; and we seek refuge with Allāh. This is because he did not believe in Allāh the Exalted. Our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the best of all mankind and his father is in the Hellfire, his grandfather is in the Hellfire, and his uncle is in the Hellfire. Only those who believe and work righteous actions will be in Paradise. Prophet Nūḥ ﵇ could not benefit his son—as Allāh mentioned concerning him[3]—when he turned away from his father and became from the disbelievers, and became from the inhabitants of the Hellfire. Likewise, his (Nūḥ's) father is from the inhabitants of the Hellfire, although Nūḥ ﵇ is the prophet of Allāh and the first messenger sent to the people on earth. So the people will not benefit from the good deeds of their relatives or the good deeds of their friends, parents, or children. The people will only benefit from their own good deeds.

We ask Allāh the Exalted to grant us all success in performing good deeds sincerely for His Face, and [to grant us] sincere repentance. We ask Allāh to allow us to safeguard our time with what will bring us benefit, and may He preserve our lives with benefit.

And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions collectively.

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[3] **Translator's Note**: Allāh the Exalted said:

> So it (the ship) sailed with them amidst the waves like mountains, and Nūḥ called out to his son, who had separated himself (apart): "O my son! Embark with us and be not with the disbelievers." The son replied, "I will betake myself to a mountain; it will save me from the water." Nūḥ said, "This day there is no savior from the decree of Allāh except him on whom He has mercy." And a wave came in between them, so he (the son) was among the drowned.

[Sūrah Hūd 11:42-43]

THE TWENTIETH SITTING

The Virtue of the Last 10 Nights of Ramaḍān

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may the salutations and peace of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

The last 10 nights of Ramaḍān are the best days of the month. The Prophet ﷺ specified these 10 nights with noble good deeds because these days seal the month. These are the days in which the servants are freed from the Hellfire. And it is hoped that the Night of Qadr is in the last 10 nights more so than it is hoped in the other nights. The Prophet ﷺ used to spend most of the night in prayer, and he would lengthen the standing, bowing, and prostration. This is the meaning of his statement "spend his night" in the *ḥadīth* [in which] 'Ā'ishah ﵄ said:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ، وَأَحْيَا لَيْلَهُ، وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ.

With the start of the last 10 days of Ramaḍān, the Prophet ﷺ used to tighten his waist belt and spend his night in prayer, and he used

to wake his family for the prayers.[1]

This means he would stay awake most of the night, and it has been said that he would stay awake the entire night during the last 10 nights. Thus, he either stayed awake most of the nights or all of the nights involved in worship. He would not stay awake involved in "he said, she said," laughing, or wasting time, as most of the people do during our era. Most of the people during our time stay awake at night during the nights of Ramaḍān not involved in what will rectify their religion or the worldly life; rather, they only spend the night in "he said, she said," laughing, joking, and playing, and this is a tremendous loss!

He would particularize these nights by waking his family, each and every young and old person who was old enough to pray. This shows that it is necessary for the Muslims to wake their family, the youth, and their children to pray with the Muslims and participate with them in worship so they can attain the reward from Allāh the Exalted. They stand in prayer themselves, and they also have their families stand in prayer and encourage them to participate with the Muslims and give life to the *masjid* by establishing the night prayer and reciting the Qur'ān. This is in contrast to what many people do today; they are heedless of their sons and daughters. Their sons play in the streets while their parents don't know where they go. And the daughters and women in most cases go to the shopping mall and mix with the men and the flirtatious individuals, and other unacceptable actions.

Even if a woman goes to the mall and she has religious commitment, shyness, and modesty, she still exposes herself to *fitnah* (trials and tribulations), and perhaps she will see those other women who are lackadaisical in their religious commitment. And the woman is more likely to be influenced by others and emulate them.

It is obligatory to safeguard the family, male and female, during Ramaḍān and outside of Ramaḍān, but during Ramaḍān, they will miss great rewards and many good deeds which Allāh has placed inside this month. The last 10 days are blessed. If the people miss its blessing, they will miss a great deal from their lives, and perhaps they will develop a habit of heedlessness and laziness. Thus, they will not pay attention to the virtuous times of the year and the best times for good deeds, and they will waste their time the entire year. This is because if they are raised upon laziness, carelessness, and wasting time, they will not give it any concern; thus, their entire life will be based upon laziness, carelessness, and lack of concern, because they will not be cultivated upon good. Thus, cultivation upon good has a tremendous effect in developing the family and the home. And heedlessness has a tremendous effect upon the family and the home.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2024

It is obligatory upon the Muslims to give great concern to this affair, especially during the great blessed times.

From those things that the Prophet ﷺ would specify during the blessed last 10 days, during the end of his life, is *i'tikāf* (seclusion) in the *masjid*. *I'tikāf* means: Remaining in the *masjid* during the night and the day and only leaving for needs that are essential, according to what is needed, and then returning to the *masjid*. All of his time was spent in the *masjid*, night and day.

The Prophet ﷺ would isolate himself from the people (in the *masjid* during the last 10 nights), even though the people loved him more than all others; they loved him more than a thirsty person loves cold water. Nothing pleased them more than seeing him, sitting with him, and hearing his speech. They loved him more than they loved themselves, their children, and everything. Despite this, he would isolate himself from the people during these last 10 days and sit in a tent where no one could see him so he could worship his Lord the Exalted and remember Him. And he ﷺ is the example for all.

It is upon the Muslim to participate in this isolation and stay in the *masjid* as much as he is able. If he can perform *i'tikāf* the entire time, this is best. And if he is not able to perform complete *i'tikāf*, he should still participate even for a short amount of time, according to how long he is able to remain in the *masjid*. Sitting in the *masjid* is *i'tikāf,* even for a short amount of time, and Allāh multiplies the good deeds of the worshipers; rather, He multiplies and increases them a great amount.

Thus, be diligent in spending some time in the *masjid* every year, but the last 10 days are the most confirmed days to spend time isolated in the *masjid*. So spend time in the *masjid* remembering Allāh and worshiping Him, reciting His Book and giving life to your heart. The *masājid* are the places of the angels, the places of mercy, the places of humility, and places of obedience to Allāh the Exalted.

The *masjid* contains great delight, so when you enter the *masjid,* you find happiness and comfort, and distance from stress and worries. It is the place of worship, the place of the angels, and the place where mercy descends. The *masjid* is a house from the houses of Allāh the Exalted. Therefore, be connected to the *masjid*, always be connected to the *masjid,* especially during the month of Ramaḍān, and especially during the last 10 days.

This is the way the Muslim must conduct himself. The Muslim must be cognizant of the virtuous times of the year and the virtuous places so he can participate in the good deeds that are easy for him and so he will not forget himself. If he forgets about these virtues and these virtuous places, then he has surely forgotten about himself.

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴾

And be not like those who forgot Allāh, thus He caused them to forget their own selves. Those are the evil doers.

[Sūrah al-Ḥashr 59:19]

We ask Allāh the Exalted to grant us all success in good and righteousness, and may the salutations and peace of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions collectively.

THE TWENTY-FIRST SITTING

The Virtue of the Obligatory Prayers During Ramaḍān & the Other Months & the Virtue of the Supererogatory Prayers

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

The prayer is a great act of worship; Allāh the Exalted loves it. It was the coolest for the eyes of the Messenger ﷺ because it is a connection to Allāh the Exalted, standing before Him and supplicating to Him, bowing and prostrating. Thus, the prayer combines various types of worship which no other act of worship combines. For this reason, Allāh made it the second pillar of Islām after the two testimonies of faith.

The prayer is of two categories; the first category is the obligatory prayer. These are the five daily prayers which are from the pillars of Islām. These prayers must be preserved and the Muslim must continue upon them for his or her entire life, from the time they reach the age of religious responsibility until they die. The Muslim must establish the prayer each day and night five times a day, as Allāh the Exalted has commanded. There is no religion for the person who neglects the prayer, and he will not be a Muslim until he establishes the prayer. If he establishes the prayer, he establishes his religion; if he neglects his prayer, he neglects his religion. It is the first action that the person will be called to account for on the Day of Judgment. It is the differentiating factor between the Muslim and the non-Muslim. Thus, it is a pillar of Islām.

After the obligatory prayer, there are the supererogatory prayers. It is befitting for the Muslim to increase his supererogatory prayers and not limit himself to the obligatory prayers; rather, he must increase his supererogatory prayers because he is in need of these prayers.

The best of the supererogatory prayers are the prayers connected to the five daily prayers: four *raka'āt* before Ẓuhr and four *raka'āt* after Ẓuhr, or at least two *raka'āt* before Ẓuhr and two *raka'āt* after it; two *raka'āt* after Maghrib and two *raka'āt* after 'Ishā'; and two *raka'āt* before Fajr, and these two *raka'āt* are the most confirmed.

After the supererogatory prayers connected to the five daily prayers comes the Witr prayer during the night; it is a confirmed Sunnah which should not be abandoned, whether the person is a resident or traveler.

After the Witr prayer, there is Tarāwīḥ prayer during the month of Ramaḍān, then Tahajjud prayer during the night. The Muslim prays Tahajjud prayer according to what is easy for him, and the more he increases it, the better it will be. Tahajjud prayer can be prayed during any part of the night, but it is best prayed during the last part of the night, and this is the last third of the night, or the middle of the night; one-sixth from the middle third along with one-sixth from the final third. This is considered to be the middle of the night. If he delays it until shortly before morning, he will be from those who seek forgiveness in the morning.[1]

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[1] **Translator's Note**: Allāh the Exalted said: The patient, the true, the obedient, those

The last third of the night is the time of the divine descent. Our Lord descends to the lowest heaven each night when there only remains one-third of the night. The Prophet ﷺ said:

ينزل رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الآخِرُ يَقُولُ: مَنْ يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيَهُ مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ.

The Lord descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains and says, "Who will call upon Me, that I may answer Him? Who will ask of Me, that I may give him? Who will seek My forgiveness, that I may forgive him?"[2]

This occurs every night; thus, the one given success to pray during this time obtains a great deal of good, and the door for his supplication to be answered is open. Thus, the person seeks forgiveness a lot and repents during this time. He prays for himself, his parents, and the Muslims. This is an opportunity available every night for the Muslim.

The night prayer is the best of the supererogatory prayers; it is sealed with the Witr prayer such that he makes the last of his prayer the Witr. If he starts praying at the beginning of the night, he ends his prayer with the Witr and he makes it at the end of the night; this is best. That which is important is that the Witr prayer should not be abandoned. The person can pray the Witr before sleeping or they can delay it until the end of the night, and this is best.

Then after that is Ḍuḥā prayer, from sunrise when the sun has risen to the height of a spear above the horizon until right before the sun is overhead at noon, until it has passed its zenith. All of this is the time of the Ḍuḥā prayer. Each time it is delayed, it is better. The least is two *raka'āt* and the most is eight *raka'āt*, and the *taslīm* is

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who spend [in the way of Allāh], and those who seek forgiveness before dawn. [Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:17]

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 758

said after every two *raka'āt.*

As for the yearly season for worship, then it is during Ramaḍān. This increases the good during the life of the Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا, غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during Ramaḍān, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[3]

And in another *ḥadīth* he said:

مَنْ قَامَ مَعَ الإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كُتِبَ لَهُ قِيَامُ لَيْلَةٍ.

Whoever stands in prayer with the *imām* until he leaves, will be written among those who prayed the night prayer.[4]

And in another *ḥadīth* he said:

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during the Night of Qadr, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[5]

These are some of the tremendous virtues for this great month, especially during the last 10 nights. These contain an increase for the supererogatory acts of worship during the life of the Muslim. Thus, during this time, he multiplies the supererogatory acts of worship he performs during the entire year, aiming towards this blessed month. This is the treasure for the Muslim by which Allāh crowns him and makes him firm. Consequently, it is not befitting to squander this time, because if he squanders this time, he squanders his soul and his life. And he will not benefit from his life.

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1031

[4] Collected by at-Tirmidhi (806); also narrated by Abū Dāwūd (1375), an-Nasā'i (1605), and Ibn Mājah (1327).

[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2024

It is obligatory upon the Muslim to not be among the heedless, and he must take his portion of supererogatory acts of worship after preserving the obligatory acts. If the person performs the supererogatory acts of worship while not preserving the obligatory acts of worship, then the supererogatory acts of worship will not benefit him. The supererogatory acts of worship will only benefit the person after they have preserved the obligatory acts of worship.

We ask Allāh to grant all of us success in what He loves and is pleased with. And may the salutations and peace of Allāh be upon Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions.

THE TWENTY-SECOND SITTING

Praise for Those Who Obeyed Allāh from the Previous Nations for Reciting the Book & Establishing the Prayer

All praises belong to Allāh, and may salutations and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۗ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ
اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ (١١٣) يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ
فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (١١٤) وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ
خَيْرٍ فَلَن يُكْفَرُوهُ (١١٥) ﴾

Not all of them are alike; among the People of the Book are those who stand in obedience; they recite the verses of Allāh during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer. They believe in

Allāh and the Last Day, and they enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and hasten to good deeds. And those are among the righteous. And whatever good they do, nothing will be rejected of them.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:113-115]

After Allāh the Exalted criticized the People of the Book from the Jews and Christians, those who disbelieved in 'Īsā—meaning, the Jews—and those who disbelieved in Muḥammad—meaning, the Jews and the Christians—He made an exception for a group of them who believed and did not do the same actions as the others from the People of the Book. Rather, they believed in all the messengers and they believed in the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad ﷺ. They were the followers of the previous messengers, from the monks of the Jews and Christians; those like an-Najāshi ﵀ and the likes of 'Abdullāh bin Salām ﵁, and those like Salmān al-Fārisi ﵁. They were those upon the religion of 'Īsā ﵇, the correct religion of *tawḥīd* and worship, making the religion sincere for Allāh the Exalted. Thus, when Muḥammad ﷺ appeared, they believed in him and followed him.

Therefore, Allāh made an exception with them and praised them, because Allāh the Exalted rules with justice. He will not allow the reward of any worshiper to be lost. The most pious people in the sight of Allāh are the most pious, regardless of their nationality.

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴾

Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you.

[Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt 49:13]

And He promised to give them two rewards: a reward for believing in 'Īsā ﵇ and a reward for believing in Muḥammad ﷺ.

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ

﴿ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴾

And those who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], and what was revealed before you, and they believe with certainty in the Hereafter.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:4]

They will have two rewards: a reward for believing in the previous prophet and a reward for believing in the succeeding Prophet. They did not have any motive or desire except pleasing Allāh the Exalted. They did not have whims and desires like the deviant Jews or the misguided Christians, who only followed their desires. Rather, they were believers and their motive was the truth. Wherever they found the truth, they accepted it. Therefore, when Muḥammad ﷺ appeared, they followed him and believed in him, because their previous books confirmed him, as did the previous messengers. The previous books and messengers gave glad tidings of Muḥammad ﷺ and informed that he would appear. So when he appeared, they believed him and followed him because their only goal was to please Allāh. Thus, they deserve praise from Allāh and a great reward.

The point of reference is His statement:

﴿ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴾

They recite the verses of Allāh during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:113-115]

This is an incitement to stand the night in prayer and recite the Qur'ān during Ramaḍān and outside of Ramaḍān, because Allāh praised those who do this and promised them a tremendous reward.

﴿ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ﴾

They believe in Allāh and the Last Day.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:113-115]

If the action is not based upon faith and certainty, then it will not benefit the person. The consideration is not given to the appearance of the action, even if the person prays during the night and fasts during the day. The consideration is not given to the appearance of the action; the consideration is given to the intention, purpose, and goal. Their goal was only the obedience of Allāh the Exalted, pleasing Him, and receiving His honor. Those who have these attributes are praised.

In addition to this, their actions are not limited to themselves; rather, their actions transfer to others, so they enjoin the good and forbid the evil because they want good for the people as they want good for themselves. And there is no doubt that sins are evil, thus, they prohibited sins. They avoid sins themselves, and they prohibited their brothers from sins likewise, because they love for their brothers what they love for themselves. The believer does not just benefit himself, he benefits his brothers also. If he sees them in harm, he warns them against it and enjoins them with good. And good is the obedience of Allāh the Exalted, because it is pure good in this life and the next.

From the greatest attributes of the believers from previous nations and this nation is that they enjoin the good and they prohibit the evil. The person who does not enjoin the good and forbid the evil—even if he is righteous concerning his own actions—he is very deficient. And he may not have faith. The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ
فَبِقَلْبِهِ وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الإِيمَانِ.

Whoever among you sees an evil action, then let him change it with his hand. If he cannot, then with his tongue; and if he cannot, then with his heart—and that is the weakest of faith.[1]

In another narration, he said:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 49

لَيْسَ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الإِيمَانِ حَبَّةُ خَرْدَلٍ.

And beyond that, there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed.[2]

The person who does not enjoin the good and forbid the evil according to their ability—even by hating it in their heart—does not have faith in their heart. The believer must enjoin the good and forbid the evil according to their ability, even if all they can do is hate it in their heart. If good and evil is the same to them, the believer and disbeliever are equal, and the righteous people and wicked people are the same to him, and he says, "The people are free to do as they wish; my only concern is myself," then this person is not a believer, or beyond that, there is no faith, even to the extent of a mustard seed.

﴿ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ ﴾

And they hasten to good deeds.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:113-115]

This is another of their descriptions; they are also from the first to perform acts of obedience. You find them in the first row of the *masjid* in congregational prayer; they come either before the *adhān* or after, and they never miss prayer in the first row. They are from those who hasten to do good deeds. As for those who linger behind and miss some prayers or miss every prayer and you only find them arriving late—they are not from those who hasten to good deeds. Rather, he is from those who linger behind, and he is in a very dangerous situation. He lingers behind again and again until, in the end, he abandons the prayer. This is because the Shayṭān gradually overcomes him; thus, the affair is extremely dangerous.

Hastening towards good is a quality of the people of faith. This is when the person is always energetic towards good and always the first to go towards good deeds, whether it be the prayer, fasting,

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 50

jihād in the cause of Allāh, charity, or any righteous deed. You will find them rushing to it, without delay, procrastination, or laziness. Laziness towards good is a sign of a hypocrite.

﴿ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَىٰ يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا
يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

And when they stand up for the prayer, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allāh but little.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:142]

﴿ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا
وَهُمْ كَارِهُونَ ﴾

And they do not come to the prayer except in a state of laziness and they do not give charity except while they hate doing so.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:54]

In another verse, He said:

﴿ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ ﴾

And they close their hands (from spending in Allāh's cause).

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:67]

This means that they close their hands from giving charity; this is an attribute of the hypocrites. The believer is always rushing to perform good deeds; they are not lazy and they do not lag behind. If there arises an opportunity to assist those in need and those afflicted, then he assists in the relief efforts and aid, even if it is by supplicating for his Muslim brothers. He is concerned for them and he feels their pain and he is happy with their joy.

تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَوَادِّهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى عُضْوًا تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ جَسَدِهِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى.

The believers, in their mutual mercy, love, and compassion, are like a (single) body: if one part of it feels pain, the rest of the body will join it in staying awake and suffering fever.[3]

The believers are with the believers—they feel joy with their joy, happiness with their happiness, and pain with their pain. If they notice some of them have a deficiency in their religion, they rush to assist them in repairing this deficiency, teaching them, cautioning them, and helping them with wisdom and good discourse, gentleness, kindness, and brotherhood. These are the qualities of the believers.

As for those who utilize the pitfalls of the Muslims as a vehicle to dismiss and ridicule them, and to speak ill of them in the gathering and belittle them—this is an attribute of the hypocrites.

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ﴾

Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter.

[Sūrah an-Nūr 24:19]

Those who mock the pitfalls of the Muslims and follow their mistakes, saying, "So-and-so did such-and-such, this leader did this, this president did that"; their only concern is to follow the mistakes of others—this is an attribute of a hypocrite, and with Allāh refuge is sought. [They are] those who are delighted with the pitfalls of the Muslims and who spread their faults among the people; rather, they lie on the Muslims a great deal. Even if they believe that what they are speaking about is an evil, their speaking about it is a greater evil.

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[3] Collected by al-Bukhāri (5665) and Muslim (2586).

As for the believer, he conceals the faults of his brother. Concealing the faults of the Muslims does not mean that one is silent; rather, he advises them in secret among themselves, or he sends them advice in secret in any way he is able. He does so with wisdom, good advising, and arguing with them in the best way. This is because they want good and they do not want corruption. These are some of the qualities of the believers.

We ask Allāh to make us and you from them, by way of His favor and generosity. And may the salutations of Allāh and His peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and Companions collectively.

THE TWENTY-THIRD SITTING

The Levels of the Believers

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ
ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ
اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ ٣٢ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا
يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا
حَرِيرٌ ٣٣ ﴾

Then We gave the Book for inheritance to such of Our slaves whom We chose. Then of them are those who wrong their own selves, and of them are some who follow a middle course, and of them are some who are, by Allāh's leave, foremost in good deeds. That is indeed a great virtue. [For them are] gardens of 'Adn which they will enter. They will be adorned

therein with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be silk.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:32-33]

In these verses, Allāh the Exalted explains that He gave this Qur'ān as an inheritance, meaning that He gave this great Qur'ān to those He preferred: the believers from this nation, which is the best of all nations. As Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ ﴾

You are the best nation ever raised up for mankind.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:110]

And Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا ﴾

And thus, we have made you a just nation.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:143]

This means that He made this nation a just nation and the best nation.

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى
النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴾

You are the best nation ever raised up for mankind that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muḥammad) be a witness over you.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:143]

These verses prove the virtue of the nation of Muḥammad and Allāh preferred them, and that is due to the attributes this nation possesses from belief in Allāh, His Messenger, righteous actions, and leaving off impermissible actions. As for those who ascribe to this *ummah* while opposing the Book and the Sunnah, then their ascribing to this *ummah* will not benefit them. The only ones who will benefit are those who have these qualities of this *ummah*, including being upright upon the *'aqīdah* of this *ummah*, its worship, and its methodology. This is the person who is from this *ummah*.

Then He divided this *ummah* into three categories:

1) Those who oppress themselves: These are the people who commit sins less than polytheism.

2) Those upon a middle course: These are the people who perform the obligations and abandon the prohibitions, and they may perform some hated things and leave off some recommended acts.

3) Those who are foremost in good: This is the highest level. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ (١٠) أُولَٰئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ (١١) فِي
جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ (١٢) ﴾

And those foremost will be foremost (in Paradise). These will be those nearest to Allāh, in the Gardens of Delight (Paradise).

[Sūrah al-Wāqi'ah 56:10-12]

And then He mentioned that all of them are in Paradise. Those foremost in good are those who perform the obligations and the recommended acts while staying away from the prohibitions and the hated acts, and likewise they avoid some permissible things in an effort to be cautious. These are the foremost in good deeds.

Then Allāh the Exalted mentioned that each of the three groups is in Paradise. As for the foremost in good deeds, they will enter Paradise without any reckoning. Those who are in the middle will receive an easy reckoning. And those who oppress themselves will have to discuss their account, and they are beneath the will of Allāh; if He wants, He will forgive them, and if He wants, He will punish them according to their sins, and then they will enter Paradise after that.

Then Allāh the Exalted mentioned the adornments of the inhabitants of Paradise:

﴿ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴾

They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be silk.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:33]

They will be adorned with gold and pearls in Paradise. As for in this world, then it is not permissible for the men to wear gold; men can only wear gold in Paradise, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

لا تشربوا في آنية الذهب والفضة، ولا تأكلوا في صحافها، فإنها لهم في الدنيا، ولكم في الآخرة.

Do not drink from vessels of gold and silver, and do not eat from plates made of the same, for they are for them [the disbelievers] in this world and for you in the Hereafter.[1]

The believers will wear gold in Paradise and their vessels will be of gold and silver.

﴿ يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ ﴾

Trays of gold and cups will be passed around them.

[Sūrah az-Zukhruf 43:71]

In Paradise, they will wear gold, silver, and pearls, as is mentioned in these verses. As for in this world, the believers avoid wearing them in obedience to Allāh because it is for the disbelievers in this world. They are those who wear gold and silk. Silk is likewise impermissible for Muslim men in this world. The Prophet ﷺ said about gold and silk:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 5633

إِنَّ هَذَيْنِ حَرَامٌ عَلَى ذُكُورِ أُمَّتِي حِلٌّ لِإِنَاثِهِمْ.

These two are forbidden for the males of my nation and permitted for the females.[2]

This is in this world; as for in the next life, then the inhabitants of Paradise will wear silk and brocade. For this reason, He said:

﴿ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴾

And their garments therein will be silk.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:32-33]

The affair in Paradise is not similar to the affair in this world; this world is the abode of testing and the abode of tribulation, and the abode of commands and prohibitions. As for Paradise, it is the abode of bliss, the abode of happiness, and the abode of joy. Paradise is not the place of burdens, permissibility, and prohibitions; rather, everything in Paradise is permissible as a reward for what they put forth in this world. They abandoned what Allāh has prohibited for them in this world, so Allāh allowed it for them in Paradise, such as silk, gold, and silver. They will be adorned with it and they will eat and drink from its vessels as a reward for them from Allāh.

As for the disbelievers, they enjoy gold and silk in this world because in the next life they will be in the Hellfire, receiving its punishments, such as chains, shackles, and blazing fire; and with Allāh refuge is sought. Likewise, they will eat from the tree of *zaqqūm*. This is because, in this world, they opposed the command of Allāh the Exalted, disbelieved in Allāh, and associated partners with Him. They made permissible what Allāh prohibited, so they are prohibited from the pleasures of the Hereafter. As for the believers, they followed the commands of Allāh and His prohibitions; they avoided what Allāh prohibited and took what He allowed. They fulfilled the obligations of Allāh, so they will have bliss and complete happiness on the Day of Judgment. The matters that were prohibited from them as a test will now be allowed for them. Their result will be great, and it is Paradise.

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[2] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 3726

﴿ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ ﴾

Gardens of ‘Adn.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:32-33]

There are multiple Paradises, not just one, because Paradise is various levels, with each level above the other. And there are many Paradises. "Gardens of ‘Adn." The word "‘Adn" means "eternal." This is because they will reside there forever and never leave; they will have no fear therein and they will not grow old. They will remain young forever and healthy always. They will remain in bliss, enjoyment, pleasure, and happiness which will never cease.

﴿ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ
فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴾

They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be silk.

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:33]

They will praise Allāh and thank Him, because they only obtained this Paradise due to the virtue of Allāh. Thus, they acknowledge this favor of Allāh, and they will say, "All praises belong to Allāh."

﴿ الَّذِي أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ الْمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا
نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ﴾

"Who, out of His grace, has lodged us in a home that will last forever; there, toil will touch us not,

nor will weariness touch us.”

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:35]

They will be in Paradise in relaxation, enjoyment, and bliss. They will never get tired or discontented. They will never grow old or become sick. They will never get hungry or thirsty, and they will never get cold; rather, they will live in eternal bliss.

﴿ مُّتَّكِئِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ ۖ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا
زَمْهَرِيرًا (١٣) وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَالُهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَذْلِيلًا
(١٤) وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِآنِيَةٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرَا
(١٥) قَوَارِيرَ مِن فِضَّةٍ قَدَّرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا (١٦) ﴾

Reclining therein on raised thrones, they will see neither the excessive heat of the sun nor the excessive bitter cold. And the shade thereof is close upon them, and the bunches of fruit thereof will hang low within their reach. And amongst them will be passed ‘round vessels of silver and cups of crystal, crystal-clear, made of silver. They will determine the measure thereof according to their wishes.

[Sūrah al-Insān 76:13-16]

This is their drink, these are their vessels, these are their clothes, and these are their adornments. And what is greater than this is that all of these blessings will never cease and never come to an end. They will have no fear of their possessions being stolen or taken by force, as occurs in this world. If a person was given all that he desired from wealth and pleasures in this world, he would not feel safe with it; rather, he would live in constant fear. He will be threatened with sickness, enemies, senility, and old age; all of this lies in his future. Thus, he will not be at ease or able to enjoy it. He will also feel that his wealth will run out or suffer a loss. And he may suffer an illness that prevents him from enjoying his wealth. And even if he does not become sick, he will eventually die; death will come and take him to the afterlife. As for Paradise, there is no fear in Paradise.

﴿ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ﴾

"Toil will touch us not, nor will weariness touch us."

[Sūrah Fāṭir 35:35]

They will always remain in happiness and contentment. There will be no envy amongst them, no animosity, and no competing; rather, they will be brothers reclining upon couches. In Paradise, there will not exist envy, hatred, tale-carrying, or slander; rather, they will be brothers reclining together on couches. Allāh will remove all rancor and hatred from their hearts, so none of them will find in his heart anything against his brother. This is the completeness of happiness and a completeness of the favor.

We ask Allāh the Exalted to join us and you amongst them upon righteous actions and a good ending upon Islām. And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and Companions collectively.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH SITTING

The Virtue of Du'ā'

All praises belong to Allāh. May the salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and his Companions.

Verily, *du'ā'* (supplication) is the most virtuous form of worship, as is mentioned in the *ḥadīth:*

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ.

***Du'ā'*, it is worship.**[1]

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴾

And your Lord said, "Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship, they will surely enter Hell in humilia-

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[1] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 1479; *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 3828

tion!"

[Sūrah Ghāfir 40:60]

Allāh commanded us to make *du'ā'* and He promised to answer, and He informed us that *du'ā'* is worship. "Verily! Those who scorn My worship." Thus, He called *du'ā'* worship. And the *ḥadīth* proves that *du'ā'* is the greatest form of worship, because there are many various forms of worship other than *du'ā'*, but because *du'ā'* is the greatest form of worship, he called it worship. This is similar to the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

الْحَجُّ عَرَفَةُ.

Ḥajj is 'Arafah.[2]

Ḥajj has many rites; from them is standing at 'Arafah, but because standing at 'Arafah is the greatest rite of Ḥajj, the Prophet ﷺ said: "Ḥajj is 'Arafah." This means that the greatest rite of Ḥajj is standing at 'Arafah. Likewise, *du'ā'* is a category of worship, but because it is the greatest form of worship, it is called "worship."

From that which shows the virtue of *du'ā'* is that the Muslim is requested to make *du'ā'* frequently. Allāh has commanded the Muslims with this. This is from the mercy of Allāh the Exalted, that He commands His slaves with *du'ā'*, because they are in need of it. And when they supplicate to Him, He will answer them. As for those who turn away from Him, then He has no need for them, and they only harm themselves by preventing themselves from Allāh responding to them.

Du'ā' has special times wherein the answer is more probable, such as during the month of Ramaḍān, the last 10 nights of Ramaḍān, and during the Night of Qadr. The entire month of Ramaḍān is the month of *du'ā'* and worship, but the last part of the month is even more affirmed as it relates to the virtue of *du'ā'*. *Du'ā'* is more likely to be accepted during this part of the month than other than it.

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[2] *Sunan an-Nasā'i* 3016

Thus, it is necessary upon the Muslim to strive in *du‘ā'* in his prayer, his prostration, his bowing, and all the positions of the prayer. The Muslim must beseech Allāh with supplication. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ
الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْشُدُونَ ﴾

And when My slaves ask you (O Muḥammad) concerning Me, then, I am indeed near. I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me. So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:186]

Allāh is near in responding to the supplication, but the concern is given to the trustfulness of the slave and their turning to Allāh the Exalted.

There are conditions for the *du‘ā'* being accepted—it is not just mere words that are said; rather, there are conditions for the *du‘ā'* to be accepted and things that prevent the *du‘ā'* from being accepted.

From the conditions for *du‘ā'* being accepted are:

- *Tawḥīd* to Allāh the Exalted, such that the Muslim makes his heart sincere to Allāh the Exalted, and he is upright and far away from *shirk*. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴾

So invoke Allāh, [being] sincere to Him in religion, although the disbelievers dislike it.

[Sūrah Ghāfir 40:14]

Thus, *tawḥīd* is a condition for *du‘ā'* to be accepted because *tawḥīd* brings the person close to Allāh the Exalted and it is a means for the *du'ā'* being accepted.

- An attentive heart: Likewise, from the conditions for the *du'ā'* being accepted is an attentive heart. Thus, the Muslim supplicates with an attentive heart, turning to Allāh, hoping for acceptance of his supplication. He must not supplicate with a heedless heart, turning away; if he does so, he is only moving his tongue while his heart is heedless. This person will not have his *du'ā'* accepted. It appears in a *ḥadīth*:

ادْعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَنْتُمْ مُوقِنُونَ بِالإِجَابَةِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَسْتَجِيبُ دُعَاءً مِنْ قَلْبٍ غَافِلٍ لاَهٍ.

Supplicate to Allāh while you are certain it will be answered, and know: Allāh does not accept *du'ā'* from a heedless, occupied heart.[3]

- Calling upon Allāh with His names and attributes: Likewise, from the means for *du'ā'* being accepted is to call upon Allāh through His names and attributes. You call upon Him by His names: O Raḥmān, O Raḥīm, O Allāh, O Lord. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا ﴾

And (all) the Most Beautiful names belong to Allāh, so call on Him by them.

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:180]

Say: O Allāh, O Most Beneficent, O Most Merciful, O All-Forgiving, O Oft-Forgiving, O Ever-living, O Sustainer of all, O Owner of Majesty and Honor. Call upon Allāh the Exalted by His names and attributes. This is from the reasons for your *du'ā'* being accepted.

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ

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[3] *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 3479

يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ ﴾

And (all) the most beautiful names belong to Allāh, so call on Him by them, and leave the company of those who practice deviation concerning His names.

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:180]

- Special times: Seek the times in which *du'ā'* is accepted. It is upon the Muslim to supplicate constantly, but he should also seek those times wherein *du'ā'* is more likely to be accepted, such as when the person is prostrating in prayer in front of his Lord the Exalted during the last part of the night, the last hour on Friday, the month of Ramaḍān, and the last 10 nights of Ramaḍān. *Du'ā'* is more likely to be accepted during these times than other times.

From the matters which prevent *du'ā'* from being accepted is for the person to be heedless while supplicating, so he supplicates with an inattentive heart.

And from the greatest matters which prevent *du'ā'* from being accepted is consuming that which is impermissible. Those who consume what is impermissible will not have their *du'ā'* accepted. The Prophet ﷺ said:

ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلَ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ: يَا رَبِّ!
يَا رَبِّ! وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغُذِّيَ بِالْحَرَامِ،
فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابُ لَهُ؟

Then he mentioned a man who travels a great deal and becomes disheveled and covered with dust, who raises his hands to the heavens (and says), "O Lord, O Lord," while his food is *ḥarām*, his drink is *ḥarām*, his clothes are *ḥarām*, and he has been nourished with *ḥarām*; so how can he receive a response?[4]

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[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1015

Thus, consuming *ḥarām* is a reason for *du'ā'* not being accepted; it is from the greatest reasons that prevent *du'ā'* being accepted. Thus, the Muslim must purify his food. Sa'd said to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allāh, supplicate to Allāh that my *du'ā'* will be accepted." The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to him:

أَطِبْ مَطْعَمَكَ تجبْ دعوتُكَ.

Purify your food, and your *du'ā'* will be accepted.[5]

The Muslim must avoid eating impermissible food because it prevents his *du'ā'* from acceptance, and eating impermissible food comes between the Muslim and his Lord. This is extremely dangerous for the people. The love of wealth could lead a person to earn his wealth from impermissible means such as deception, trickery in buying and selling, and the most severe of all: consuming usury and interest; and with Allāh refuge is sought. Likewise, taking bribes; bribes are a great evil, and those who use bribes are cursed. Included in this is eating *ḥarām* food, such as the meat of dead flesh and pork, and drinking alcohol. Feeding the body with impermissible food is a reason for *du'ā'* being rejected. We ask Allāh for safety and security.

And Allāh knows best. May salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

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[5] *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* 2/328. **Translator's Note**: The Permanent Committee of Scholars (Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azīz, Shaykh al-Fawzān) mentioned that this narration is weak although the meaning is correct (*Fatwā* 21278).

THE TWENTY-FIFTH SITTING

Looking at the Noble Face of Allāh & How to Obtain This Blessing

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. May the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

The greatest blessing which the inhabitants of Paradise will enjoy is seeing the noble Face of their Lord. This has been affirmed in the Noble Qur'ān and through numerous chains of narration in the Sunnah, and from the consensus of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ﴾

For those who have done good is the best (reward) and extra.

[Sūrah Yūnus 10:26]

The "best reward" refers to Paradise while the "extra" refers to looking at the noble Face of Allāh. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ ﴾

They will have whatever they wish therein, and with Us is more.

[Sūrah Qāf 50:35]

"They will have whatever they wish therein"; this means in Paradise. "And with Us is more"; the "more" is looking at the Face of Allāh.

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴾

(Some) faces that Day shall be shining and radiant

[Sūrah al-Qiyāmah 75:22]

Their faces will be shining and beautiful from their radiance.

﴿ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴾

Looking at their Lord

[Sūrah al-Qiyāmah 75:23]

They will look at their Lord with their eyes as an honor for them. And Allāh the Exalted says about the disbelievers:

﴿ كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ﴾

Nay! Surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.

[Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn 83:15]

The disbelievers will be veiled from seeing their Lord while the believers will not be veiled.

Thus, seeing the noble Face of Allāh the Exalted for the inhabitants of Paradise is affirmed, and there is no doubt about it. And it will be a tremendous bliss, and that will be a reward for them because in this world they believed in Him with belief in the unseen; they believed in Him although they could not see Him. Thus, Allāh the Exalted will honor them by favoring them in the next life with allowing them to see Him with their eyes. They believed in Him during the worldly life though they could not see Him, so they will receive the ultimate reward, which is seeing Him on the Day of Judgment. And seeing Him will bring them great delight.

It is mentioned in an authentic *ḥadīth* which is agreed upon:

إنكم سترون ربكم كما ترون القمر ليلة البدر وكما ترون الشمس صحوا ليس دونها سحابة.

Verily, you will see your Lord just as you can see the moon on a clear night and just as you are able to see the sun clearly without any clouds.[1]

This is because Allāh the Exalted will grant them the ability in the next life to see their Lord; as for in this life, Allāh the Exalted cannot be seen in this life. The people cannot bear seeing Him due to the weakness in their bodies and perception. Likewise, no one sees Allāh in this world in order to perfect their belief in the unseen, that which is the highest level of faith.

Mūsā عليه السلام is the one who spoke to Allāh; Allāh specified him by speaking to him directly. Thus, he heard the speech of Allāh without the mediation of an angel; Allāh spoke directly to him. Mūsā heard His speech and He addressed him. Despite this high level that Mūsā achieved, when he asked to see his Lord[2]:

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ﴾

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 554

[2] **Translator's Note**: Allāh the Exalted said: And when Mūsā (Moses) came at the time and place appointed by Us, and his Lord spoke to him, he said, "O my Lord! Show me (Yourself), that I may look upon You." Allāh said, "You cannot see Me, but look upon the mountain; if it stands still in its place, then you shall see Me." So when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He made it collapse to dust, and Mūsā fell down unconscious. Then when he recovered his senses, he said, "Glory be to You, I turn to You in repentance and I am the first of the believers." [Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:143]

He said, "O my Lord! Show me (Yourself), that I may look upon You."

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:143]

Upon hearing the speech of his Lord, he desired to see Him, so he said, "O my Lord! Show me (Yourself), that I may look upon You." Allāh responded to him:

﴿ قَالَ لَن تَرَانِي ﴾

He said, "You will not see Me…"

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:143]

Meaning, you will not see Me in this world because you don't have the ability to see Me. Then Allāh wanted to show him his inability to see Him in this world, so He said:

﴿ وَلَٰكِنِ انظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ ﴾

"…but look at the mountain."

There is no doubt that the mountain is steadier and stronger than man, and more solid. Despite this, the mountain was not able to remain intact when Allāh showed Himself to it.

﴿ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا ﴾

So when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He made it collapse to dust.

The mountain became a heap of dust. It was crushed and became dust due to the greatness of Allāh the Exalted.

﴿ وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا ﴾

And Mūsā fell down unconscious.

He was rendered unconscious due to terror and fear. He fell to the ground unconscious. When he awoke and the fear had left him, he said:

﴿ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"Glory be to You, I turn to You in repentance and I am the first of the believers."

This is proof that no one will see Allāh the Exalted in this world, regardless of the level and nobility they reach. Even Mūsā عليه السلام was not able to see his Lord in this world. Likewise, when Muḥammad ﷺ ascended to the heavens, he did not see his Lord with his eyes, according to what is most correct. This is the consensus of Ahlus-Sunnah. He did not see his Lord with his eyes; rather, he only saw Him with his heart. Thus, no one will see their Lord in this world.

Seeing Allāh is a treasure which He has stored to honor His allies in Paradise and on the Day of Judgment. They (the inhabitants of Paradise) are those who will see Him, and seeing Him will bring coolness to their eyes, and they will enjoy pleasure from seeing their Lord the Exalted.

This is proven with firm evidence from the Book and the Sunnah and the consensus of the Muslim scholars from the Salaf and those that followed them. The believers seeing Allāh in the next life is affirmed. Thus, it must be believed; consequently, the scholars have deemed believing in seeing Allāh in the next life as an affair from the foundational matters of belief, such that it is mentioned in the foundational books of *'aqīdah* so the Muslim will take it as his *'aqīdah*, affirm it, and have faith in it. The person who denies that the believers will see their Lord on the Day of Judgment is a disbeliever—after they have been shown the proofs which affirm this. This is because they belie Allāh, belie His Messenger, and belie the consensus of the Muslims.

We ask Allāh for safety and security. And may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH SITTING

The Dispraise of Being Amazed with This Worldly Life

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions collectively.

The reality of this world is that it is an abode with a limited time; it is not an eternal abode or a permanent residence. This world is merely a terminal. If the person uses this world and busies himself with the obedience of Allāh, it will become a farm for the next life. But if he busies himself with his desires and lusts, then he will lose this world and the next. This world will not remain for him and he will have nothing in the next life. As Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ ﴾

He loses both this world and the Hereafter. That is the evident loss.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:11]

The first person uses this world and does not let this world use him; rather, he busies himself with what will benefit him with Allāh the Exalted. This person will benefit in this world and the next. He profits in this world because he busies himself with good and he profits in the next life because he put forward good deeds. In many verses, Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا ﴾

Let not then this worldly life deceive you

[Sūrah Luqmān 31:33]

Allāh the Exalted has forbidden us from being deceived by this worldly life, because the one deceived by it will be betrayed, he will waste his time, and he will squander his life. This world is play, amusement, and heedlessness. Some people don't spend their time in amusement, but they spend day and night trying to amass wealth, collecting money or gadgets, and this is the reality of many people today. They busy themselves with inventions and gadgets, and then what? What is the result? All of this will be inherited by others. They spend their life for something that will not remain with them.

This does not mean that the people do not benefit from the beneficial things of this world and its inventions; on the contrary, the people should benefit from them and use them in the obedience of Allāh. Allāh the Exalted has made this world for his believing slaves.

﴿ قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ
مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ۚ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ﴾

Say (O Muḥammad): "Who has forbidden the adornment of Allāh which He has produced for His servants and the good [lawful] things of provision?" Say: "They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) exclusively for them (believers) on the Day of Resurrection."

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:32]

﴿ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ﴾

And has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth

[Sūrah al-Jāthiyah 45:13]

﴿ خَلَقَ لَكُم مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ ﴾

It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:29]

"For you is all of that which is on the earth"; this does not mean that you busy yourself with the worldly life and forget the next life; rather, it means you busy yourself in obtaining what will assist you in obedience to Allāh the Exalted. The person who uses this world to benefit himself in this life and the next is the person who prospers, while the person who is busy with this world and it is his main concern is like the one whom Allāh mentions in this verse:

﴿ وَفَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا
مَتَاعٌ ﴾

And they rejoice in the life of the world, while the life of this world as compared with the Hereafter is but a brief passing enjoyment.

[Sūrah ar-Ra'd 13:26]

This is the difference between the person who benefits from this world and the one who is destroyed by it. This world is not despised in and of itself; it is only the actions of mankind in this world which are despised. Praise and dispraise returns back to the actions of man; as for the world itself, then it is a material subjugated for man—some people do good upon it while others do evil upon it. The world is like a weapon. The believers use it to strive in the cause of Allāh and to make the statement of Allāh the highest, and to defeat the enemy, while the disbelievers use weapons against the people for transgression and oppression. The weapon is the same, but the consideration is given to how it is utilized. The other affairs of this world are similar to this, so the praise and dispraise is based on how the people use it.

Paradise is built by the remembrance of Allāh, saying *"subḥānAllāh," "al-ḥamdulillāh,"* and *"Allāhu Akbar."* Its trees are planted by the remembrance of Allāh; this is proof that this world is a farm for the Hereafter. The scholars have said, "This world is a farm for the Hereafter." Some people say that this world is a vehicle to the afterlife, and this is correct. It is a farm and a vehicle. Some people plant thorns and harmful things, some people plant colocynths[1]. And some people plant good fruits and good plants that benefit them and others. This person plants a date tree, which Allāh has made as nourishment and good food, while this person plants drugs which destroy him and the world. Thus, the difference is based on how man utilizes this world.

The successful Muslim is the one who capitalizes from this world and the Hereafter. The miserable person is the one who only takes advantage of this world and becomes a slave to it. And in the end, the world will either go away and leave him, or he will go and leave the world. And the world will be a thorn for him while it will be a fruit for others.

It is upon the intelligent Muslim with insight to ponder the affairs of his world, and he should not be like an animal that does not know the intent of this world. Rather, animals are better than a person like this because an animal only hurts someone if it is harmed. Also, animals will not be taken to account. There is no Paradise or Hellfire for animals; they were created for this world. Animals are from the beneficial matters of this world. People ride animals, eat the meat of animals, drink the milk of animals, and use the skins and fur of animals for clothes. Thus, they were created for mankind. Animals are not religiously responsible. These things were created for mankind, so he must deal with them in a good manner and use them properly so these things can benefit him in the present and the future.

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[1] **Translator's Note**: A small hard fruit with a bitter pulp, also called bitter cucumber and desert gourd.

May Allāh grant all of us success in what He loves and is pleased with.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SITTING

The Virtue of the Night of Qadr

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. May salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

The Night of Qadr (Laylatul-Qadr) is a great night. Allāh exalted this night in His noble Book and described it with tremendous descriptions. It is the Night of Qadr. *Qadr* means the status and position. And this means the night when the lifespans and decrees that will happen that year are decreed. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ﴾

Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of wisdom.

[Sūrah ad-Dukhān 44:4]

At any rate, it is a tremendous night. Allāh has described it as better than a thousand months; meaning, worship during this night is greater than worship for a thousand months which do not contain this night. So what do you think about a night which is greater than a thousand months?! The person absorbs himself in the worship of Allāh the Exalted. If Allāh gives the Muslim success in catching the Night of Qadr and striving with standing the night in prayer and worship during this night, then Allāh will write for him the reward for standing in prayer for a thousand months as an increase for his good deeds.

There is no doubt that this night is during the month of Ramaḍān, because Allāh mentioned that He sent the Qur'ān down during this night, and the Qur'ān was sent down during the month of Ramaḍān. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ ﴾

The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān...

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

This means that the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'ān started during this month, then it continued to be revealed to the Prophet ﷺ according to incidents that occurred, until the death of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. With it, Allāh completed the religion and concluded the descent of the Noble Qur'ān. Thus, the beginning of the revelation of the Qur'ān was during this noble night, and due to the greatness of the Qur'ān and the status of the Qur'ān, Allāh exalted the night in which it was first revealed to His Messenger ﷺ.

From the virtues of this night is that, during this night, the angels descend to the earth.

﴿ تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ ﴾

Therein descend the angels and the Rūḥ (Jibrīl).

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:4]

No one knows the number of angels except Allāh. Allāh sends the angels down to assist the Muslim upon His obedience, just as He sends them down to assist them in fighting in the cause of Allāh. Therefore, the angels descend to earth on this night.

As for the Rūḥ, it is said that this is Jibrīl ﵇. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ
الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ ﴾

Which the trustworthy Rūḥ has brought down, upon your heart (O Muḥammad) that you may be (one) of the warners.

[Sūrah ash-Shu'arā' 26:193-194]

It has also been said that "Rūḥ" is a category of angels only known to Allāh the Exalted. And from the meaning of the word *rūḥ* is strength. Thus, the angels are strong and they descend to strengthen the believers upon faith and obedience.

He has described this night as:

﴿ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ﴾

Peace it is until the emergence of dawn.

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:5]

All of it is safe from evil, pests, and harms, so the entire night is safe and secure. The people of this night are safe from evil, pests, and calamities until the emergence of the dawn, until Fajr arrives.

Two affairs are necessary during this night. The first matter is Tarāwīḥ prayer and Tahajjud, as well as other supererogatory prayers. The door is open for those who want to increase the supererogatory prayer. He can pray alone or in congregation, in his home or at the *masjid*. If he prays this entire night, then this will not be too much.

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ، وَأَحْيَا لَيْلَهُ،

وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ.

With the start of the last 10 days of Ramaḍān, the Prophet ﷺ used to tighten his waist belt and spend his night in prayer, and he used to wake his family for the prayers.[1]

Another narration mentions that he would not close his eyes ﷺ.[2] But if the Muslim prays Tarāwīḥ prayer and Tahajjud with the *imām,* this is a great deal of good. It is mentioned in the *ḥadīth:*

مَنْ قَامَ مَعَ الإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كُتِبَ لَهُ قِيَامُ لَيْلَةٍ.

Whoever stands in prayer with the *imām* until he leaves will be written among those who prayed the night prayer.[3]

The second affair concerning this night is *du'ā'*. The Muslim must say a lot of *du'ā',* both inside the prayer and outside the prayer. *Du'ā'* inside the prayer is more virtuous, especially while the person is prostrating. Verily, he is closest to his Lord while he is prostrating. The Prophet ﷺ encouraged us to supplicate a lot while in *sujūd* because the *du'ā'* is most likely to be answered in this position. Thus, the Muslim must strive in *du'ā'*. He should seek those comprehensive *du'ā'* that agree with the Book and the Sunnah, from those supplications that appear in the Book and the Sunnah. Likewise, he should supplicate for what he needs, because the needs of the people differ. Some of the people are sick, so they ask Allāh to be healed. Some of the people are poor, so they ask Allāh to enrich them. All the people are in need of forgiveness; thus, they all seek His forgiveness and ask Him to pardon them from the sins they bear. Thus, the Muslim asks for forgiveness a great deal and he asks for mercy, for surely, Allāh is the All-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Some of the people are deficient in their religion and they commit some sins and transgressions, so they need to increase in seeking forgiveness and sincere repentance during this night, and they should increase in *du'ā'* during the last 10 nights and at the end of each night and each year.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2024

[2] **Translator's Note**: *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā'* 90030.

[3] Collected by at-Tirmidhi (806); also narrated by Abū Dāwūd (1375), an-Nasā'i (1605), and Ibn Mājah (1327).

Thus, Allāh's door is always open, night and day, especially during the last part of the night and the time before daybreak. Allāh has opened a door for you.

ينزل رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا حِينَ يَبْقَى ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الآخِرُ يَقُولُ: مَنْ يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيَهُ مَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ.

The Lord descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains and says, "Who will call upon Me, that I may answer Him? Who will ask of Me, that I may give him? Who will seek My forgiveness, that I may forgive him?"[4]

This is every night, but during these last 10 nights and during this exact night, it is more affirmed for the Muslim to strive in *du'ā'*, seeking forgiveness, repentance, and asking from Allāh the Exalted. And Allāh is happy with the repentance of His slave, while He has no need for it. But due to His mercy, He is happy with the repentance of His slaves. He is happy when they achieve good and when they repent, because He wants to show them mercy and He wants them to prosper. This is from the kindness of Allāh, because He has absolutely no need of His slaves. If all of them disbelieved, that would not diminish His kingdom in the least. And if all of them were to accept Islām, that would not increase His kingdom in the least. But from His mercy, virtue, and kindness, He loves for His slaves to seek forgiveness and repent so He will forgive them. And when they ask of Him, He will take care of their needs, enrich them from their poverty, and forgive them for their sins.

Thus, the people must strive in *du'ā'* while avoiding supplication against the people when they have not been transgressed upon. If they are patient and pardon those who wrong them, this is better. If someone harms you or makes a mistake towards you, do not supplicate against the people; rather, be patient and Allāh will compensate you with better than what you left.

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[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 758

﴿ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ﴾

But whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allāh.

[Sūrah ash-Shūrā 42:40]

This is even though supplicating against the oppressor is permissible; but to remain patient and seek the reward from Allāh and pardon is better. This is in relation to the person who has been oppressed, so how about the oppressor—how can he supplicate against the people unjustly?! The only reason he does so is because they don't follow his desires and go along with his requests.

Do not supplicate for sin or to obtain something impermissible. Do not supplicate to break the ties of kinship; do not supplicate against your relatives or kinfolk. This is the opposite of keeping the ties of kinship which Allāh has commanded. Even if someone oppresses you, do not supplicate against them; rather, be kind to them. The reward with Allāh is better and longer lasting. Do not supplicate to break the ties of kinship and do not supplicate for sin; all of this is considered transgression in *du'ā'*, and Allāh the Exalted has prohibited this.

It is upon the Muslim to have the proper etiquette when making *du'ā'*. He should be certain that Allāh is going to answer his *du'ā'*, and he should supplicate sincerely to Allāh the Exalted. He should avoid eating and consuming the *ḥarām*, as this will prevent his *du'ā'* from being accepted. Likewise, he must not become hasty and impatient with his *du'ā'* being accepted and he should not despair from the mercy of Allāh. He should not say, "I supplicated and supplicated but my *du'ā'* was not answered," and as a result he will stop making *du'ā'* and he will despair from Allāh's mercy. On the contrary, he must continue to supplicate. Allāh the Exalted has full knowledge of all things. Perhaps it is more beneficial for the person if the response to his *du'ā'* is delayed. Thus, all affairs return to Allāh the Exalted.

Du'ā' is worship for which the person will be rewarded even if he does not receive his need. He is still rewarded for supplicating, because it is worship. And Allāh the Exalted has commanded us to worship Him. Allāh will perhaps safeguard the person from evil that is equivalent to the *du'ā'* he made, or He may delay answering his supplication. And delaying the *du'ā'* could be more beneficial and better for him than hastening the answer. Thus, the slave does not do what is best for him, so he trusts the affair to Allāh the Exalted.

In summary: *Du'ā'* is good in every aspect, and it is worship of Allāh the Exalted. And *du'ā'* can be said at any time, but the response to the *du'ā'* is more likely during certain times, like this night (the Night of Qadr) and this blessed month (the month of Ramaḍān).

And with Allāh lies all success and may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SITTING

Fearing the Punishment of the Grave

All praises belong to Allāh and may salutations and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

To proceed:

The punishment of the grave has been affirmed in the Book and numerous reports in the Sunnah, and by the consensus of the scholars. It is the punishment between the realm of this world and the Hereafter. The grave is called *al-barzakh* because it is what separates this world and the afterlife, so it is the middle stage. When the person dies, he is placed in *al-barzakh,* meaning the grave. Then, on the Day of Judgment, he will be raised from his grave and taken to the place of gathering. After that, he will either go to Paradise or the Hellfire. There he will remain for eternity, as the afterlife is the eternal abode.

There are three abodes: the abode of this world, the abode of *al-barzakh,* and the eternal abode. *Al-barzakh* is the realm between the two worlds and it is the grave. The worldly life is the abode of action and there is no reckoning [in it], while *al-barzakh* is the abode of waiting, then the people will be transported to the Hereafter when they are raised from their graves. Although the grave is the waiting station, the person will experience some of what is to come in the afterlife—either Paradise or the Hellfire, bliss or punishment. This will occur in the grave. The grave will either be a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of the Hellfire. And with Allāh refuge is sought. This will be based upon the actions of mankind.

When the deceased is first placed in his grave, and his grave is leveled and his burial is complete, two angels will enter his grave and his soul will be returned to his body. He will be made to sit up and then the two angels will ask him, "Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?" The believer will say, "My Lord is Allāh, Islām is my religion, and my Prophet is Muḥammad ﷺ." Allāh will make him firm, as Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ﴾

Allāh will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world and in the Hereafter.

[Sūrah Ibrāhīm 14:27]

If the person gives this correct answer, a caller will call from the heavens:

أَنْ صَدَقَ عَبْدِي فَأَفْرِشُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَأَلْبِسُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَافْتَحُوا لَهُ بَابًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ.

Verily, My servant has spoken the truth, so spread out for him a bed from Paradise, dress him in garments from Paradise, and open for him a door from Paradise.[1]

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd (4753).

Then his grave will be spread as far as the eye can see. The fragrance from Paradise will come to him in his grave and he will look at his place in Paradise. He will say, "O my Lord, establish the Hour so I can return to my family and my wealth"; meaning, in Paradise.

As for the hypocrite and those who have doubt when they are asked, "Who is your Lord, what is your religion, and who is your Prophet?" They will stammer and stutter and they will not be able to answer. They will say, "Ah, ah, I don't know; I heard the people saying something, so I said it."

In this world, they blind-followed the people just to live with them, without faith, without *tawḥīd;* they only walked with the people to receive the benefit. This is how the hypocrite performs actions in the open, but in his heart, he is a disbeliever and apostate. Thus, this will come between him and his answering the questions in the grave. He will not be able to say what he said in this world. In this world, he used to say, "I testify that nothing has the right to be worshiped except Allāh and I testify that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh" with hypocrisy, but in his grave, he will not be able to say it. Rather, he will be unable to say it, and he will stammer and say, "Ah, ah, I don't know; I heard the people saying something, so I said it."

A caller will call from the heavens and say, "Verily, My slave has lied, so spread out for him a bed from the Hellfire, and open a door for him from the Hellfire."[2] His grave will become tight such that his ribs interlock. And this is the statement of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ ۚ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴾

And Allāh will cause to go astray the wrongdoers.
And Allāh does what He wills.

[Sūrah Ibrāhīm 14:27]

They will be punished in a pit from the pits of the Hellfire.

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[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd (4753).

For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ sought refuge in Allāh from the punishment of the grave and he commanded us to always seek refuge in Allāh from it. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إذا تشهد أحدكم فليستعذ بالله من أربع: من عذاب جهنم ومن عذاب القبر ومن فتنة المحيا والممات ومن فتنة المسيح الدجال.

When one of you says the *tashahhud*, let him seek refuge in Allāh from four matters: the punishment of the Hellfire, the punishment of the grave, the trials of life and death, and the trial of the Dajjāl.[3]

He commanded us to say this in each prayer after the final *tashahhud* before saying *salām*. Thus, it is upon the Muslim to be diligent upon this *du'ā'* during the final *tashahhud* and he should not abandon it.

The Prophet ﷺ would seek refuge from the punishment of the grave, and he told his Companions about the punishment of the grave. He said:

فَلَوْلا أَنْ لا تَدَافَنُوا، لَدَعَوْتُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُسْمِعَكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ الَّذِي أَسْمَعُ.

If it were not that you would not bury (your deceased), I would supplicate to Allāh to make you hear the punishment of the grave that I hear.[4]

The Prophet ﷺ passed by two graves and said:

أَمَا إِنَّهُمَا لَيُعَذَّبَانِ وَمَا يُعَذَّبَانِ فِي كَبِيرٍ، ثم قال بلى، إنه لكبير، أَمَّا أَحَدُهُمَا فَكَانَ يَمْشِي بِالنَّمِيمَةِ، وَأَمَّا الْآخَرُ فَكَانَ لَا يَسْتَتِرُ مِنْ بَوْلِهِ.

"They are both being punished, and they are not being punished for something that was difficult to avoid." Then he said, "Rather,

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[3] Collected by at-Tirmidhi (3613).

[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2868

surely it was a major sin. As for one of them, he would carry around malicious gossip, and as for the other person, he would not protect himself from his urine."[5]

The punishment of the grave has reasons, and its reasons are sins and transgressions like backbiting, tale-carrying, and not purifying oneself from filth. The punishment could be continuous from the person's death until the resurrection. And with Allāh refuge is sought. And it could last for a limited time. Some of the believers will be punished in their graves and then the punishment will be lifted from them, either by way of the *du'ā'* of the righteous supplicating for them and seeking forgiveness for them, or by the time for the punishment ending. This is because if the believer is punished, it will not be a continuous punishment; rather, he will be punished according to his sins, then the punishment will be lifted from him. As for the disbeliever and the hypocrite, their punishment will be continuous.

The punishment of the grave is from the affairs of the Hereafter; its reality is only known to Allāh the Exalted. Allāh the Exalted revealed this to the Prophet ﷺ, so he knew of it what Allāh showed him. And some of the righteous people may be shown the punishment of the grave as a warning and admonition. Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ mentioned some unsettling matters concerning the condition of the grave as it relates to the punishment of the deceased.

The deceased could be suffering punishment but if you open his grave, you will not perceive anything, nor will you see him being punished; you will not see anything, but he is being punished. Two people could be buried in the same grave; one of them is getting punished while the other is enjoying bliss, and they are lying beside each other. The punishment of this one will not reach the deceased beside him, and the bliss of this one will not reach the deceased beside him. This is because the punishment of the grave is from the affairs of the next life, and its reality is only known to Allāh.

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[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 218

The punishment of the grave will reach the deceased whether he is buried or not buried, even if he is eaten by a bird, thrown in the sea, or crucified upon wood. The punishment of the grave will reach him in whatever place he may be. And Allāh has power over all things.

In summary, the punishment of the grave is an affair that is affirmed. No one denies it except the people of misguidance and innovation. As for the people of faith, they believe in it and attest to it, and they seek refuge with Allāh from the punishment of the grave. And they avoid the reasons that will cause a person to be punished in his grave.

We ask Allāh to give us and you refuge from the punishment of the grave and from the punishment of the Hellfire. And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE TWENTY-NINTH SITTING

Ending Upon Good

All praises belong to Allāh, and may salutations and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family, and his Companions.

There is no doubt that ending with good deeds is a tremendous affair. The Salaf (may Allāh have mercy upon them) used to give great importance to ending their affairs upon good. This is following the example of the Prophet ﷺ and working according to the statement of the Exalted:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ﴾

And those who give (their charity) which they give with their hearts full of fear, because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning).

[Sūrah al-Mu'minūn 23:60]

Allāh described His believing slaves as those who perform righteous actions, are obedient, and strive in worship while they fear their Lord with severe fear because they do not know if their actions will be accepted or not. Therefore, the person must not be amazed by his actions regardless of what he does, because if Allāh does not accept it, then it will have no benefit, even if his actions are numerous and great. If his actions are not accepted, they will be like scattered dust particles; thus, it will have been toil and hard work without benefit.

But if his actions are accepted by Allāh, even if his actions are little, then Allāh the Exalted will multiply his actions and give him a great reward. As Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا
وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾

Surely! Allāh wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a small ant), but if there is any good (done), He doubles it and gives from Him a great reward.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:40]

It is upon the slave to perform the action, and the acceptance of the action comes from Allāh the Exalted, and He is aware of the intention of the slave and his sincerity. But the Muslim is reassured that Allāh will not allow any action to be lost, regardless of how small it is. Thus, it is upon him to increase his actions and it is upon him to be sincere. And it is upon him to have hope in Allāh and not despair of His mercy. Despite this, the person must not become impressed with his actions or deem that he has done a great deal of good deeds; rather, he must ask Allāh to accept his deeds and follow up his good deeds by seeking forgiveness. This is because the people are prone to mistakes and deficiency. He may have many actions that contain a lot of mistakes and deficiencies, as well as matters that invalidate or decrease his good deeds. Thus, he repairs these deficiencies by seeking forgiveness.

Therefore, the person must seek forgiveness a lot after his good deeds and at the conclusion of worship, such as the conclusion of the month of Ramaḍān. The Muslim whom Allāh grants success in fasting, and Allāh grants him success in standing in prayer, it is upon him to follow it up with seeking forgiveness and submitting himself in front of Allāh the Exalted. The consideration is not that he performed the action in the correct manner, because he does not know—maybe his deeds are full of errors, so he must seek forgiveness a lot and understand that his good deeds are minimal as it relates to the right of Allāh the Exalted.

The Prophet ﷺ, despite his numerous good deeds, his sincerity, and striving in good actions, said to his Lord:

لَا أُحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ.

I cannot praise You enough.[1]

This was acknowledgment of his deficiency as it relates to what Allāh is deserving of, so how about everyone other than him? These are those whom Allāh described in the verse:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
رَاجِعُونَ ﴾

And those who give (their charity) which they give with their hearts full of fear, because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning).

[Sūrah al-Mu'minūn 23:60]

This means that they are afraid and they do not feel safe from the plan of Allāh. Some people say, "We prayed, we fasted, we have performed the duties upon us." The Muslim does not say this, because this is being impressed with his actions, and this is self-praise and praising one's actions. The Muslim, regardless of how many good deeds he performs, deems them to be small as it relates to the rights of Allāh the Exalted. And regardless of what actions he performs, he does not know if his actions are correct or not. Man commits a great deal of sins with his tongue, his actions, and his interactions. Perhaps his sins may invalidate his actions or clearly decrease the reward.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 486

It is upon the Muslim to count his sins and not count his good deeds. It is upon the Muslim to take himself to account and count his sins and transgressions, seek forgiveness, repent, and not count his good deeds. He should not say, "I did this and that good deed"; rather, entrust your good deeds to Allāh, as He will not lose the good deeds of the worshiper; his actions are preserved. If the person has good deeds, then he should not fear that his deeds will be lost from Allāh.

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴾

And Allāh would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost. Truly, Allāh is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:143]

Instead, the person should fear from the standpoint of himself, from sins and destructive transgressions. It is upon him to take himself to account. He must ponder the sins that he committed. So for each sin he commits, he repents and seeks forgiveness; this is what is upon the slave.

At the end of the month of Ramaḍān, the Salaf would increase in seeking forgiveness and repentance to Allāh the Exalted, and they feared their good deeds would not be accepted. They would strive hard during the month of Ramaḍān and outside of the month, then they would be afraid that none of their actions would be accepted. They would seek Allāh's forgiveness and repent to Him. It has been narrated that they would supplicate to Allāh for six months to allow them to reach the month of Ramaḍān. And if they reached the month of Ramaḍān, they would fast and pray at night and then supplicate to Allāh for six months to accept from them the month of Ramaḍān.

From the signs that the good deeds have been accepted during the month of Ramaḍān and outside the month of Ramaḍān is that the person follows up a good deed with another good deed. Thus, if the condition of the Muslim is good after Ramaḍān and he performs a lot of good deeds, this is proof it was accepted from him. But if the opposite occurs, and he follows good deeds with evil deeds—so when the month of Ramaḍān exits, he follows it with evil, heedlessness, and turning away from the obedience of Allāh—then this is proof that the good deeds were not accepted. Each person knows his condition after the month of Ramaḍān. Each person must look at his situation—if his situation is good, let him praise Allāh, as this is proof that his deeds were accepted. And if his situation is evil, then let him repent to Allāh and seek Allāh's forgiveness, because this is proof that his deeds have not been accepted and it is proof of negligence.

And the person must never despair from the mercy of Allāh and thus close the door between himself and Allāh.

﴿ قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا
مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴾

Say: "O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the mercy of Allāh; verily, Allāh forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

[Sūrah az-Zumar 39:53]

Thus, it is upon the people to repent, seek forgiveness, and return to Allāh the Exalted. And Allāh accepts the repentance of those who repent.

﴿ وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾

And He it is Who accepts repentance from His slaves and forgives sins, and He knows what you do.

[Sūrah ash-Shūrā 42:25]

And may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE THIRTIETH SITTING

Ending the Month of Ramaḍān with Tawḥīd & Seeking Forgiveness

All praises belong to Allāh and may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

As to what follows:

Verily, *tawḥīd* and seeking forgiveness are two great affairs. *Tawḥīd* is the right of Allāh the Exalted upon His slaves, and this is the purpose He created them for. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴾

And I created not the *jinn* and humans except that they should worship Me.

[Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56]

Likewise, *tawḥīd* is what makes all the actions correct, and without *tawḥīd,* none of the actions will be correct. Thus, it is the foundation that the religion of Islām is built upon. And it is the pillar that all the actions are based upon, and *tawḥīd* is what causes the actions to be accepted by Allāh the Exalted. Therefore, it is obligatory upon the Muslim to give great concern to the affair of *tawḥīd* first and to rectify his *'aqīdah*.

Tawḥīd means: “Nothing has the right to be worshiped except Allāh.” And “nothing has the right to be worshiped except Allāh” means that there is no true object of worship except Allāh. Therefore, worship—all of it—is the exclusive right of Allāh. It is not permissible to give any aspect of worship to other than Allāh. This is the reason Allāh sent all of the messengers and sent down all the Books.

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا
إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴾

And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muḥammad) except that We inspired him (saying), “None has the right to be worshiped but I (Allāh), so worship Me.”

[Sūrah al-Anbiyā' 21:25]

﴿ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ﴾

And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.

[Sūrah al-Isrā' 17:23]

﴿ وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ﴾

Worship Allāh and do not associate any partners with Him.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:36]

Tawḥīd is the right of Allāh upon His slaves, while forgiveness is the slave’s right upon Allāh. Seeking forgiveness is to request pardon, and it is the need of the slave. The slaves are in need of seeking forgiveness. Seeking forgiveness is requesting pardon for the mistakes the person falls into as it relates to the rights of Allāh the Exalted, either by abandoning an obligation or committing a sin.

Thus, the slave seeks forgiveness from his Lord and repents to Him, having a strong resolve to leave the sin and perform the obligations. He asks his Lord to forgive him for what preceded from his mistakes concerning the rights of Allāh, and he rectifies his future. As for the person who seeks forgiveness but does not rectify his future, rather he continues to sin, this repentance is not correct. You have only sought forgiveness if you repent and rectify your future. Thus, you seek a pardon from Allāh for what has preceded, with the aforementioned condition.

The slave is in need of seeking forgiveness; thus, seeking forgiveness was a trait of the prophets (peace be upon them), from Ādam to Muḥammad ﷺ. All of them sought Allāh's forgiveness and requested His pardon because they were in need of doing so. So if the prophets were in need of seeking forgiveness—as Allāh mentions in the Glorious Qur'ān when He mentioned all the prophets and their seeking forgiveness—then those who are not prophets are in need of seeking forgiveness constantly. Even while performing acts of worship, when the person prays, fasts, gives charity, performs Ḥajj and 'Umrah, and worships Allāh, he is in need of seeking forgiveness; so how about the person who sins and transgresses?

Repentance is not only by the tongue without rectifying the shortcomings and mistakes; rather, it is a must that the mistakes are corrected. The person must rectify the sins he committed and stop committing the sins. Thus, he repents and asks Allāh to not take him to account for his sins. Thus, the slave needs these two affairs: *tawḥīd* and seeking forgiveness. For this reason, Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ﴾

So know that none has the right to be worshiped but Allāh, and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:19]

His statement: "So know that none has the right to be worshiped but Allāh"; this is *tawḥīd*. And His statement: "And ask forgiveness for your sin"; this is seeking forgiveness. Allāh commanded us with these two matters: *tawḥīd* and seeking forgiveness.

When Yūnus ﵇ fell into sorrow and darkness, he cried out with *tawḥīd* and seeking forgiveness.

﴿ وَذَا النُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ
فَنَادَىٰ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَن لَّا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا أَنتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي
كُنتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

And (remember) the companion of the fish (Yūnus), when he went off in anger, and imagined that We shall not punish! But he cried through the darkness (saying), "None has the right to be worshiped but You (O Allāh), glorified (and exalted) are You. Truly, I have been of the wrong-doers."

[Sūrah al-Anbiyā' 21:87]

Thus, his statement: "None has the right to be worshiped but You (O Allāh), glorified (and exalted) are You"; this is *tawḥīd*. And his statement: "Truly, I have been of the wrong-doers," this is seeking forgiveness, acknowledging the sin, and asking Allāh to remove the difficulty. So Allāh removed the difficulty from him.

This is the etiquette of the believers: they adhere to seeking forgiveness constantly, especially at the conclusion of righteous deeds and the conclusion of gatherings, gatherings of remembrance and social gatherings. Gatherings may contain backbiting, gossip, tale-carrying, and vain speech. Thus, the atonement for that is seeking forgiveness with standing from their gathering. Thus, seeking forgiveness is a tremendous affair with great benefits.

But it is obligatory upon us to know the meaning of seeking forgiveness and what it requires. Seeking forgiveness is not just with the tongue. That is not sufficient nor beneficial unless it is accompanied by the heart with belief and righteous actions.

With this, we conclude, and we ask Allāh to seal this month for us and you by saving us from the Hellfire and accepting our good deeds, and to grant us and you well-being. Let us repent to Allāh from our sins and remain upon the worship of Allāh for the remainder of our lives. And let not our commitment to Allāh end with the ending of this month. And may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

A GIFT TO THE PEOPLE OF ĪMĀN

IN LESSONS FOR THE MONTH OF RAMAḌĀN

THE FIRST LESSON

Clarifying When the Fast of Ramaḍān Became an Obligation Upon the Ummah

All praises belong to Allāh, the Owner of virtue and grace. He has prescribed the fast to purify the souls from sin. And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the best of those who prayed and fasted; he remained steadfast upon good and uprightness. And may peace and blessings be upon his family, his Companions, and those who continue to follow him.

To proceed:

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾

O you who believe! Observing *aṣ-ṣawm* (fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain piety.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:183]

Therefore, Allāh has mentioned in these noble verses that He has prescribed fasting upon this nation just as He prescribed it upon the previous nations. And "prescribed" means that He has obligated the fast; therefore, fasting is an obligation upon this nation just as it was an obligation upon the previous nations.

Some of the scholars have said concerning the explanation of this verse that the worship of fasting has been prescribed upon the prophets and the nations from Ādam until the end of time.

And Allāh mentioned this because something that is difficult, if it is made general (for all the people), it becomes easy upon the soul to complete the task and the person will be more at ease with this.

Fasting, therefore, has been an obligation upon all of the nations, even if the manner and time in which the fast was done differed. Sa'īd bin Jubayr said, "Those who came before us used to fast from nightfall until the next night, just as it was done in the beginning of Islām."

Ḥasan said, "The fast of Ramaḍān was an obligation upon the Jews, but they abandoned this fast and they fasted one day in the year, believing that this was the day that Pharaoh was drowned; and they erred or lied concerning this because this day was the day of 'Āshūrā'. And fasting was also an obligation upon the Christians, but after they fasted for a long time, they encountered severe heat in their fast, and this was a hardship upon them in their travels and in their livelihoods. Therefore, their scholars and leaders agreed to make the fast during a season between the winter and the summer, so they made the fast during the spring. And they made this fast the same time every year that would never change. Then, upon their alteration of the fast, they said, 'We will fast an extra 10 days as atonement for the alteration we have made,' so their fast became 40 days."

And the statement of Allāh, "In order that you may obtain piety"; this means that this is the reason for fasting. Therefore, the fast is a reason for obtaining piety due to what it contains from subduing the soul and breaking the desires.

And Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ
أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ﴾

But if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty (e.g., an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a *miskīn* (poor person) (for every day).

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:184]

It was said that these were days other than the days of Ramaḍān and that it was three days. It was also said that these days were from the month of Ramaḍān, because the verse that follows it makes it clear with the statement "the month of Ramaḍān." They said that, in the beginning of Islām, the people had a choice to either fast or to feed the poor, due to the statement of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ
خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ ۚ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

And as for those who can fast with difficulty (e.g., an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a *miskīn* (poor person) (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:184]

Then the choice was abrogated and fasting was made an obligation upon us with the statement of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ﴾

So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe *ṣawm* (fasts) that month.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

And the wisdom in this is to gradually bring the legislation and to show ease upon the *ummah,* because they were not familiar with fasting, so this was a help for them upon its hardship. So in the beginning, they were given a choice between fasting or feeding the poor; then, when their certainty became strong, their souls became at ease, and they became familiar with the fast, it became an obligation upon them.

And this is how Islām dealt with hardship; so its legislation was gradual.

But that which is correct is that this verse was abrogated for those who have the ability to fast; as for those who are not able to fast or the elderly or those who are afflicted with a chronic illness, then this verse was not abrogated for them. Therefore, they can eat, and they feed a poor person for each day missed and they do not have to make the days up.

As for other than them, then it is obligatory upon them to fast. So whoever eats due to sickness or travel, then it is upon them to make the day up, based upon the statement of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ
عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ﴾

So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe *ṣawm* (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same

number [of days which one did not observe *ṣawm* (fasts) must be made up] from other days.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

And the fast for the month of Ramaḍān was made an obligation during the eighth year after the migration, and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ fasted Ramaḍān nine times.

And the fast of Ramaḍān became a requirement and a pillar of Islām—whoever denies its obligation has disbelieved. And whoever breaks their fast without an excuse while acknowledging the obligation of fasting has committed a grave sin. It is an obligation to reprimand this individual and to deter him, and it is upon him to repent to Allāh and to make up the days he missed.

THE SECOND LESSON

Clarifying How to Verify that the Month of Ramaḍān Has Begun

All praises belong to Allāh, the One Who has made the moon a guide for mankind; and may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow him in goodness.

To proceed:

Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ﴾

So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe fasts that month.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

Therefore, in this verse, Allāh the Exalted made fasting the month of Ramaḍān an obligation upon His slaves, all of it from beginning to end; and the start of the month is known by two affairs.

The First Affair: Sighting the Moon

This is based upon what has been narrated by al-Bukhāri and Muslim and other than them from the *ḥadīth* of Ibn ʿUmar ﵁ that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إذا رأيتم الهلال فصوموا وإذا رأيتموه فأفطروا فإن غم عليكم فاقدروا له.

When you see the new moon, then fast, and when you see it, break your fast; and if it is cloudy, complete the month.[1]

And it has been narrated by Imām Aḥmad from Ibn ʿUmar ﵄ from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that he said:

لا تصوموا حتى تروا الهلال ولا تفطروا حتى تروه.

Do not fast until you see the new moon and do not break your fast until you see it.[2]

And it has been narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarāni from Ṭalq bin ʿAlī: "Verily, Allāh has made these new moons a signpost, so when you see it, fast, and when you see it, break your fast."

And it has been narrated by al-Ḥākim from the *ḥadīth* of Ibn ʿUmar ﵄:

جعل الله الأهلة مواقيت للناس فصوموا لرؤيته وأفطروا لرؤيته.

Allāh has made the new moons a signpost for mankind; therefore, fast according to its sighting and break your fast according to its sighting.[3]

Therefore, with these noble *aḥādīth,* the obligation of the fast is connected to the sighting of the new moon and it is prohibited to fast without seeing it. And Allāh has made the new moons a signpost for mankind; with them, they know the times for their worship and their affairs. As Allāh the Exalted said:

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[1] Reported by al-Bukhāri (1900) and Muslim (8/1080).

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1906 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 3/1080.

[3] *Al-Mustadrak* (1/423), Aḥmad in *Al-Musnad* (4/23), and ad-Dāraquṭni (2/163).

﴿ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ ﴾

They ask you (O Muḥammad) about the new moons. Say: "These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the Pilgrimage."

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:189]

And this is from the mercy of Allāh upon His slaves and the ease that He places upon them, because He connected the obligation of their fast to an affair that is clear and a sign that is plain and evident, which can be seen by the eyes. And it is not a condition that the new moon is seen by everyone; rather, it is sufficient if some of the people see it. Even if it is only seen by one person, it becomes an obligation upon all of the people to fast.

Ibn 'Abbās said, "A desert Arab came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'Verily, I have seen the new moon,' meaning, the new moon for the month of Ramaḍān, so the Prophet ﷺ said:

أتشهد أن لا إله إلا الله.

"'Do you bear witness that nothing has the right to be worshiped except Allāh?'

"The man said, 'Yes.' He said:

يا بلال أذن في الناس أن يصوموا غدا.

"'O Bilāl, call the people to fast tomorrow.'"[4]

And it has also been narrated that Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما said, "The people showed me the new moon, so I informed the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that I saw it, so he fasted and ordered the people to fast."[5]

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[4] Reported by Abū Dāwūd.

[5] Reported by Abū Dāwūd (2342).

The Second Affair: Completing Sha'bān as 30 Days

The second affair by which we can know the month of Ramaḍān has entered if the new moon is not sighted is by completing the month of Sha'bān as 30 days. He ﷺ said:

فإن غم عليكم فاقدروا له.

If it is cloudy, then complete the month.

And what is meant by "cloudy" is if the new moon is covered by something that prevents it from being seen on the 30th night of Sha'bān, such as clouds or dust clouds; then complete the month of Sha'bān as 30 days.

And this can be found in another narration from his statement:

فإن غم عليكم فأكملوا العدة ثلاثين.

And if it is cloudy, then complete the period of 30 days.[6]

And this means that it is prohibited to fast the day of doubt. And 'Ammār bin Yāsir ؓ said, "Whoever fasts the day of doubt has indeed disobeyed Abū Qāsim ﷺ."[7]

Therefore, it is obligatory upon the Muslim to follow what has been brought by Allāh and His Messenger concerning the fast and every type of worship. And Allāh and His Messenger have limited the entrance of the month of Ramaḍān to one of two affairs that are clear to both the common person and the student: the sighting of the new moon or the completion of the month of Sha'bān as 30 days.

And whoever comes with something believing that it is obligatory to fast according to it, and it is other than what was brought by the legislation of Islām, then he has indeed disobeyed Allāh and His Messenger.

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[6] Agreed upon (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*).

[7] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2334

And they have added to what Allāh and His Messenger have legislated and they have innovated into the religion of Islām that which is not from it, and every innovation is misguidance.

And like this is the one who says that it is obligatory to follow the astronomical calculations to determine the entrance of the month of Ramaḍān, even though the calculations are subject to error; and this is a subtlety that not everyone is aware of.

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah ﵀ said: "Verily, I saw people during the month of their fasting and other than that, some of them listen to the statements of the ignorant people of calculations whether the new moon is seen or not, and they base their (understanding) upon this either hidden or apparently.

"(This is) to such an extent that it has reached me that there are judges who reject the testimony of a number of truthful individuals due to the statement of an ignorant lying person who calculates whether he sees the new moon or not. And as a result, he becomes from those who reject the truth when it comes to him."

He continued: "Verily, we know, with knowledge that Islām requires, that as it relates to the moon sighting for the fast or for the Ḥajj, or the waiting period for the divorced woman, or for fulfilling commitments and the other rulings that are based upon the moon sighting, that to use the calculations regardless if the new moon is seen or not is impermissible; and the abundant texts from the Prophet ﷺ concerning this are numerous, and the Muslims have agreed upon this and we know of no difference of opinion for times old or new concerning this."

And in this (using the calculations) is a hardship upon the *ummah* and a difficulty, whereas Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ﴾

And (Allāh) has not laid upon you in religion any

hardship.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:78]

Therefore, it is obligatory upon the Muslims to limit themselves to what has been legislated by Allāh and His Messenger (concerning the moon sighting), just as it is obligatory upon the Muslims to limit themselves to what has been legislated by Allāh in all other issues and to cooperate upon piety and righteousness, and Allāh is the Owner of Success.

THE THIRD LESSON

The Virtues of the Month of Ramaḍān &
How the Month Should Be Greeted

All praises belong to Allāh, Who has made the month of Ramaḍān possible for us, and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions; those who would become happy due to the fasting and praying of the month of Ramaḍān.

To proceed:

Verily, Allāh the Exalted has specified the month of Ramaḍān over the other months by a number of virtues, and He has distinguished the month with many merits. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ
فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ
أُخَرَ ﴾

> **The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe *ṣawm* (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe *ṣawm* (fasts) must be made up] from other days.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]*

Therefore, in this noble verse, Allāh mentioned two tremendous traits for the month of Ramaḍān.

The first trait is that the Qur'ān was sent down during this month to guide mankind from the many types of darkness into the light and to make them understand the truth from falsehood by way of this tremendous Book, this Book which contains the rectification of mankind and his success and that which will make him happy in this life and the next.

The second trait is the obligation of fasting upon the nation of Muḥammad when Allāh ordered them with this in His statement:

﴿ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ﴾

> **So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe *ṣawm* (fasts) that month.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]*

And fasting during the month of Ramaḍān is one of the pillars of Islām, and it is one of the obligations that Allāh has made obligatory upon the Muslims, and all the Muslims are in agreement with this obligation; and whoever denies the obligation of fasting is a disbeliever.

Therefore, whoever is a resident and healthy, it is obligatory upon him to fast the month of Ramaḍān during the month, as Allāh says:

﴿ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ﴾

So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe *ṣawm* (fasts) that month.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

Therefore, this verse makes it clear that there is no alternative to fasting; [there is] either fasting during the month or making the days up later. The exception is in the case of the senile or elderly or the one with a terminal illness—those who are not able to make the days up nor are they able to fast during the month of Ramaḍān; these individuals have a different ruling which shall be clarified later, if Allāh wills.

And from the virtues of this month is that which has been clarified by the Prophet ﷺ in the authentic narrations, such as the narration reported by Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إذا جاء رمضان فُتحت أبواب الجنة وغُلّقت أبواب النار وصُفدت الشياطين.

When the month of Ramaḍān comes, the doors of Paradise are opened, the doors of the Fire are closed, and the devils are chained up.[1]

Therefore, this *ḥadīth* shows some tremendous traits of this blessed month:

1) First: During this month, the doors of Paradise are opened, and this is because of the tremendous amount of good deeds being done, those deeds which have been prescribed for this month, and those deeds which are a reason for the person entering Paradise, as Allāh the Exalted says:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1898 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1079.

﴿ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

Enter you Paradise, because of (the good) which you used to do (in the world).

[Sūrah an-Naḥl 16:32]

2) Second: The doors of the Fire are shut during this month because of the small number of sins that cause a person to enter the Fire, as Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿ فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَىٰ ٣٧ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ٣٨ فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ
هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ٣٩ ﴾

Then, for him who *ṭaghā* (transgressed all bounds, in disbelief, oppression, and evil deeds of disobedience to Allāh), and preferred the life of this world (by following his evil desires and lusts), verily, his abode will be Hellfire.

[Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt 79:37-39]

And the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا أَبَدًا ﴾

And whosoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, then verily, for him is the Fire of Hell; he shall dwell therein forever.

[Sūrah al-Jinn 72:23]

3) Third: During this month, the devils are chained up, meaning that they are restrained and shackled so they cannot entice the Muslims, lure them into sin, and turn them away from righteous actions as they were able to do outside of this month.

And the devils being prevented during this month from the evil actions is only a mercy for the Muslims, to provide them with an opportunity to do good deeds and to be forgiven for sins.

And from the virtues of this month is that the good deeds are multiplied. It has been narrated that the optional deeds are equal in reward to the obligatory deeds, and the obligatory deeds have the reward of 70 obligatory deeds. And whoever provides food to break the fast of the fasting person shall have forgiveness for his sins and his neck freed from the Fire, and he will have the reward of the fasting person without decreasing the reward of the fasting person in the least.

Therefore, all of this good and all of these blessings and opportunities are provided for the Muslims by the entrance of this blessed month. Therefore, it is befitting that the Muslim greet this month with happiness, delight, and joy. And he should praise Allāh when he reaches the month and seek Allāh's help in fasting and putting forth good deeds during the month.

Verily, it is a tremendous month, a generous season, and a blessed visitor upon the Muslim nation.

We ask Allāh to give us from His blessings and opportunities; verily, He is the One who hears and answers the supplications, and all praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists.

THE FOURTH LESSON

What is Befitting That the Time Be Occupied with During the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān

All praise is due to Allāh for His bounty and beneficence. He has favored us by allowing us to reach the month of Ramaḍān and established for us therein righteous actions which bring us closer to Him. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the first to precede in good actions, and upon his family and Companions, who believed in him, helped him, aided him, and followed the light with which he was sent. They are the successful.

To proceed:

I advise you and myself to have *taqwā* of Allāh in this blessed month and other than it from the months. However, this month has a status with which Allāh has particularized it, for it is a season of good actions. It has been narrated that he ﷺ used to invoke Allāh for the reaching of Ramaḍān. So he would say when he entered the month of Rajab: "O Allāh, bless us in Rajab and Sha'bān, and let us reach Ramaḍān."[1]

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[1] Reported by al-Bayhaqi and others. Al-Albāni declared it to be weak.

It has also been narrated that he ﷺ would give his Companions glad tidings of its approach and clarify to them its virtues, saying:

أيها الناس قد أظلكم شهر عظيم مبارك.

O people, a great and blessed month has come upon you.[2]

He would urge his Companions to strive hard therein with righteous actions, from the obligatory and the supererogatory; from prayers and charity; striving in goodness and acts of kindness; patience upon the obedience of Allāh; and spending its day with the fast, its night with standing in prayer, and its hours with reciting the Qur'ān and remembering Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

So do not squander it with heedlessness and aversion, as is the case of the wretched ones who have forgotten Allāh, so He caused them to forget themselves. So they do not benefit from the passing of the time of good nor do they recognize its sanctity. And they do not give it its just due.

Many of the people do not recognize this month except as a month for the alteration of eating and drinking, so they exaggerate in giving their souls what they desire and they frequently purchase luxury items of foods and drinks. And it is known that abundance of eating and drinking makes one lazy from doing actions of obedience. That which is required of the Muslim is that he eats and drinks little so that he will be active upon obedience. Some of the people do not recognize the month of Ramaḍān except as a month of sleep during the day and wakefulness during the night, that which is of no benefit or is actually harmful. So he stays awake most of the night or all of it, then he sleeps during the day, even (neglecting) the obligatory prayers; so he does not pray with the *jamā'ah* nor in the times of the prayers. Some of the people sit at the table for *ifṭār*, abandoning Maghrib prayer with the *jamā'ah*. These groups from amongst the people do not know the worth of the month of Ramaḍān nor do they refrain from violating its sanctity; they are vigilant upon the *ḥarām* and they abandon the obligations. They do the forbidden acts, and regarding this group, they do not recognize the month of Ramaḍān except as a month for trade, laying out the commodities and seeking after the fleeting *dunyā*. So they are active in buying and selling, such that they cling to the marketplaces and they abandon the *masājid*. And if they go to the *masājid*, they are in a hurry and reluctant; they do not stay therein, because the coolness of their eyes is in the marketplaces.

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[2] On the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه who said that Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said:

أتاكم رمضان شهر مبارك، فرض الله عز وجل عليكم صيامه، تفتح فيه أبواب السماء وتغلق فيه أبواب الجحيم، وتغل فيه مردة الشياطين، لله فيه ليلة خير من ألف شهر، من حرم خيرها فقد حرم.

Ramaḍān has come upon you, a blessed month. Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ has obligated upon you its fast. The doors of Heaven are opened therein and the doors of the Hellfire are shut, and the rebellious devils are chained up. Allāh has a night therein which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its good is truly deprived.

Another group from the people does not recognize the month of Ramaḍān except as a time for begging in the *masājid* and in the streets, so that one passes most of his time moving about; traveling here and there and moving from land to land to gather wealth by begging. He makes himself look like he is in need while he is actually rich, and [he makes himself look] like he has an ailment in his body while he is actually healthy. He denies Allāh's blessing of richness and health upon him, and he takes the wealth without due right. He wastes his valuable time in that which is harmful to him, so nothing remains of virtue for Ramaḍān for these groups.

O slaves of Allāh, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ would strive hard in this month more than he would strive in other months, and he ﷺ would be serious in worship during all of its times. He would remove himself in this month from most distractions that are, in actuality, worship, but he would remove himself from the virtuous acts for that which was more virtuous than them. And the Salaf aṣ-Ṣāliḥ would follow his example in that and would single out this month, giving it great importance and dedicating themselves therein to righteous actions. They would spend its nights in Tahajjud and its days in fasting, remembrance, and recitation of the Qur'ān. They would spend time in the *masājid* with that; so let us compare our affair to their affair and how much our consciousness of this month is.

And let us know that just as the good deeds are multiplied therein, the sins committed therein are likewise [multiplied], and their punishment is increased. So let us fear Allāh the Glorified and honor His sacred things.

﴿ وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ حُرُمَاتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ ﴾

And whoever honors the sacred things of Allāh, that is better for him with his Lord.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:30]

May Allāh grant success for all righteous statements and actions, and may Allāh send prayers and peace upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE FIFTH LESSON

Clarifying the Beginning of the Fasting Day & Its End

All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. He has demarcated for His slaves appointed times and places in which good deeds are to be performed. He has clarified them to His slaves with the most complete of clarifications. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, his Companions, and those who cling to his Sunnah and are guided by his guidance.

To proceed:

Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ
لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ
أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنكُمْ ۖ فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ
وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ
لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ
أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ﴾

It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of *aṣ-ṣawm*. They are *libās* (a body covering) for you and you are the same for them. Allāh knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you and forgave you. So now, have sexual relations with them and seek that which Allāh has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the white thread (light) appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night), then complete your fast until nightfall.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

Allāh the Glorified has demarcated in this noble verse, with clear limits that everyone knows, the beginning of the fasting day and its end. So the point of its beginning is the appearance of the second Fajr and the point of its end is the setting of the sun; just as He demarcated the beginning of the month's fast with a clear limit that everyone knows, and it is with the sighting of the *hilāl* or the completion of the number of days in Sha'bān as 30 days. Thus, our religion is the religion of ease and lenience.

﴿ مَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ﴾

He has not placed upon you any hardship in religion.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:78]

So for Allāh is all praise and thanks. And this is a lightening from Allāh upon His slaves from the long fasting periods of the past. Al-Bukhāri narrated on the authority of Barā' that he said: "When the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ fasted and it became time to break the fast, if a man slept before eating, then he would not eat that night nor the next day until evening. Once, Qays bin Sirmah al-Anṣāri was fasting, so when it was time to break the fast he came to his wife and said to her, 'Do you have any food?' She said, 'No, but I will go and seek some for you.' He used to work during the day, so sleep overtook him; then his wife came, and when she saw him she said, 'You have missed it.' Then in the middle of the next day, he fainted, and that was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ, so this verse was sent down:

﴿ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ ﴾

"'It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of *aṣ-ṣawm*.'

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

"So they were overjoyed, and it was also revealed:

﴿ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ
الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ﴾

"'And eat and drink until the white thread (light) appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night).'"

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187][1]

Also in al-Bukhāri [it's narrated] on the authority of Barā' that he said, "When the fast of Ramaḍān was revealed, they would not approach their wives for the entirety of Ramaḍān. The men used to deceive themselves, so Allāh the Exalted revealed:

﴿ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَعَفَا عَنكُمْ ﴾

"'Allāh knows that you used to deceive yourselves, so He turned to you and forgave you.'"[2]

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

It is said, "He was treacherous" and "He was duped," with the meaning: You have deceived yourselves by sexual intercourse during the nights of the fasts. "So Allāh turned to you," meaning, before your *tawbah* from what occurred. "And He has forgiven you"—so He has not seized you, and he has been lenient with you and easy towards you. So He has allowed for you women, food, and drink from the setting of the sun until the appearance of the second Fajr. With that, the fasting person begins refraining from these things and others that are not permissible for the fasting person until the setting of the sun, due to His statement:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1915

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 4508

﴿ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ﴾

Then complete the fast until the night.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

And the word إلى (until) means "extent" when that which follows it is not from the same category as what was before it, for it does not enter into it (its meaning). The night is not from the category of the day, so the fast ends with the beginning of the night at the setting of the sun, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

إذا أقبل الليل من ههنا وأدبر الليل من ههنا وغربت الشمس فقد أفطر الصائم.

When the night approaches from here and the day passes away from here and the sun sets, then the fasting person breaks his fast.[3]

Some of the people differ from the legislative intent regarding the *suḥūr* and the *ifṭār*, so that a group from the people or most of them stay awake at night. So when it is the last part of the night and they want to sleep, they eat the *suḥūr* before Fajr, then they sleep and abandon the Fajr prayer in its time with the *jamā'ah*, thereby committing a number of errors:

- They fast before the time for the fast.
- They abandon Fajr prayer with the *jamā'ah*.

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1954

- They delay the prayer from its time so that they do not pray it except after they wake up, even if it is at the time for Ẓuhr.

And the innovators delay the breaking of the fast past the setting of the sun and they do not break the fast except with the appearance of the stars.

And the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ and the most evil affairs are the newly invented matters, and every innovation is a deviation.

We ask Allāh to grant us steadfastness upon the Sunnah and avoidance of innovation and its people, and may Allāh bestow prayers upon Muḥammad.

THE SIXTH LESSON

Clarifying the Ruling of the Intention Regarding the Fast

All praise is due to Allāh, the One Who knows the hidden and innermost affairs. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet, who said, "Verily, deeds are but by the intention," and upon his family and Companions, the possessors of virtues and nobility.

To proceed:

Know that the intention in the fast is a must and it is a condition for its validity, just as it is a condition for the validity of every act of worship, due to his ﷺ saying:

إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى.

Verily, deeds are but by the intention, and each one will have what he intended.

And that is by him believing at the beginning of the fast that he is fasting for Ramaḍān, or to make up for it, or that he is fasting for an oath or as expiation.

The time of the intention for this obligatory fast, with its various types, is from the night—its beginning, its middle, or its end—due to what ad-Dāraquṭni narrated, with its chain, on the authority of ʻAmrah from ʻĀ'ishah in a *marfū'* form:

من لم يبيت الصيام قبل طلوع الفجر فلا صيام له.

Whoever has not intended the fast before the appearance of Fajr, then there is no fast for him.[1]

[It's narrated] on the authority of Ibn ʻUmar from Ḥafṣah from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

من لم يبيت الصيام قبل الفجر فلا صيام له.

Whoever has not intended the fast before Fajr, then there is no fast for him.

And in another wording: "Whoever has not *yajma'* the fast at night, then there is no fast for him."[2] *Yajma',* meaning: Resolve for (*ya'zim*, يعزم). Because the fast is obligatory throughout the entire day. So if a portion of the day passes wherein the intention is not present, then the fast of the whole day is invalid, because the intention was not attached to what has passed.

The place of the intention, in all acts of worship, is the heart, and it is not permissible to articulate it because it has not come from the Prophet ﷺ nor from his Companions that they used to say, "I have intended to fast, I have intended to pray," or the likes of that. So articulation of it is an innovation. It is sufficient for the intention that one eats and drinks with the intention of fasting.

Shaykh Taqiyyud-Dīn bin Taymiyyah رحمه الله said, "It is when one dines, dining in the evening wanting to fast. And due to this, he differentiates between the night of the Eid and the nights of Ramaḍān." He also said, "Everyone who knows that he is dining from Ramaḍān while he desires its fast, then he has made the intention, and this is the action of the general Muslims."

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[1] Reported by ad-Dāraquṭni in *As-Sunan* (2/172).

[2] *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* 6/287

As for the supererogatory fast, then it is correct with the intention being made in the daytime on the condition that what nullifies the fast is not present between the appearance of Fajr and his intention, from eating or other than it, due to the statement of 'Ā'ishah ﵂: "The Prophet ﷺ entered upon me one day and said:

هل عندكم من شيء؟

"'Do you have anything (food)?'

"We said, 'No.' He said:

فإني إذاً صائم.

"'Then I am fasting.'"[3]

So his seeking food shows that he was not intending to fast before that. And his saying, "Then I am fasting," shows the beginning of the intention during the day. So it proves the validity of the intention for the supererogatory fast during the day. That is a specification for the (general) *ḥadīth:*

من لم يبيت الصيام قبل الفجر فلا صيام له.

Whoever does not intend the fast before the appearance of Fajr, then there is no fast for him.

And whatever else has come bearing its meaning, (indicating) that this is specifically for the obligatory and not the supererogatory. And that is with the condition that one does not do that which would nullify it before the intention, stopping at what the evidence necessitates.

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah ﵀ said, "As for the supererogatory fast, then it is sufficed with intention in the daytime as his ﷺ saying proves: 'Then I am fasting.' The voluntary is broader than the obligatory. Just as (with) the obligatory prayer, its pillars, like standing and being firm upon the ground, are binding therein (as opposed to the supererogatory, for it is valid upon one's mount and while walking). What is not obligatory in the voluntary acts is a broadening from Allāh of the paths of the voluntary acts for His slaves. The various types of voluntary actions are always broader (in their scope of application) than the different types of obligatory actions. And this is the most balanced of the statements."

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1154

The validity of the intention for the voluntary acts in the daytime is reported from a group of the Companions. From them is Mu'ādh, Ibn Mas'ūd, and Ḥudhayfah; and Abū Ṭalḥah, Abū Hurayrah, Ibn 'Abbās, and others did it, and Allāh knows best.

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists; may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE SEVENTH LESSON

Upon Whom is the Fast Obligatory?

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists; He has legislated (Islām) and made it easy. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, who has given glad tidings and warned, and likewise upon his family and noble Companions.

To proceed:

Know, may Allāh grant me and you success, that the fast of Ramaḍān is from the greatest of Islām's obligations. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ۝١٨٣ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ
فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ
وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ
خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ ۚ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ۝١٨٤ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى

لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ
الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ
مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ ١٨٥ ﴾

O you who believe! Observing *aṣ-ṣawm* (fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious. [Observing *ṣawm* (fasts)] for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty (e.g., an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a *miskīn* (poor person) (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know. The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong). So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramaḍān, i.e., is present at his home), he must observe *ṣawm* (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe *ṣawm* (fasts) must be made up] from other days. Allāh intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allāh for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:183-185]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

بني الإسلام على خمس: شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمد رسول الله، وإقام الصلاة وإيتاء الزكاة، وصوم رمضان، وحج البيت من استطاع إليه سبيلا.

Al-Islām is built upon five: The testimony that none has the right to be worshiped but Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh; the establishment of *aṣ-ṣalāh;* the payment of *az-zakāh*; the fast of Ramaḍān; and Ḥajj to the House for one who is able to do so.[1]

So this noble verse proves that the fast is obligatory, and the *ḥadīth* proves that it is one of the pillars of Islām. The Muslims unanimously agree upon the obligation of the fast of Ramaḍān with a consensus that is conclusive. So whoever denies its obligation is an apostate from the religion of Islām. His repentance is sought, and if he repents, then [it's] fine; otherwise, he is to be killed.

The fast of Ramaḍān is obligatory upon every Muslim, and whoever embraces Islām during the month of fasting, then he only has to fast the remainder of the month. It is not necessary for him to make up what has passed from the beginning of the month. And the fast is obligatory upon the one who is mature. As for the child who has not reached puberty, then the fast is not obligatory upon him, yet his supererogatory fast is correct. It is proper for his guardian to order him with it if he is able, so he will become accustomed to it and be cultivated upon it. The fast is not obligatory upon the insane until he regains his senses, due to his ﷺ saying:

رُفع القلم عن ثلاثة.

The pen is lifted from three.

And he mentioned from amongst them:

المجنون حتى يفيق.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 8; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 16

The insane until he regains his senses.[2]

Since the fast is obligatory upon the mature Muslim, then if he is healthy and a resident, its performance is obligatory upon him; and if he is ill, then it is obligatory for him to make it up. Likewise, for the woman who is menstruating and the woman suffering from postnatal bleeding, it is obligatory for them to make up the fast. If he is a healthy traveler, then he chooses between performance of the fast or breaking it and fasting later to make up for it.

Whoever becomes, during the day, from the people for whom the fast is obligatory—such as the *kāfir* who embraces Islām, the child who reaches puberty, the menstruating or postnatal bleeding woman who becomes pure, the ill who becomes well, the traveler who returns (from his travel), or (the one for whom) clarification of the entrance of the month is established during the day—then it is obligatory upon all of these [people] to refrain for the remainder of the day (from that which would break the fast) and to make [that day] up. It is a day from Ramaḍān in which they have not brought forth a valid and complete fast, so they are required to make it up. They are only commanded to refrain from the remainder of the day out of reverence for the time frame (of fasting).

Know that it is obligatory upon the Muslim to give due importance to his religion and that which validates it, especially the pillars of Islām upon which it is built; and from them is the fast. This magnificent act of worship is repeated in the life of the Muslim once every year. In regard to these five pillars, from them is that which is required of the slave in every moment of his life and he is never free of it, and that is the two testimonies: the declaration that none has the right to be worshiped other than Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. From them is that which is repeated in the life of the slave five times every day and night, and that is the five prayers. From them is that which is repeated in the life of the Muslim every year, and that is the *zakāh* and the fast. And from them is that which is required of the Muslim once in his lifetime, and that is the Ḥajj [if he is able to do it].

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[2] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 4398, *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 2041, *Sunan an-Nasā'i* 3432, *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* 6/100, and al-Ḥākim in *Al-Mustadrak* (2/59) and he said: "It is *ṣaḥīḥ* based on the conditions of Muslim." And adh-Dhahabi was in agreement with him.

Hence, the Muslim is entrusted with the performance of these pillars. They are repeated upon him daily and yearly in proportion to their importance, as long as he is able to perform them and they are not a difficulty upon him. Then, regarding these magnificent pillars, from them is that which is purely bodily, such as the two testimonies, the prayer, and the fast. From them is that which is purely financial, such as the *zakāh*. And from them is that which is (both) bodily and financial, such as the Ḥajj.

It is a must in all of these that the intention be made solely for Allāh specifically, due to his ﷺ saying:

إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى.

Verily, deeds are but by intention, and each one will have what he intended.[3]

And that you perform it in the legislated manner due to what the Prophet ﷺ has said:

من عمل عملا ليس عليه أمرنا فهو رد.

Whoever does an act which is not from our affair, then it is rejected.[4]

So it is obligatory upon the Muslim to give due importance to the pillars of Islām so that he performs every pillar from amongst them in its set time, purely for Allāh, correctly upon the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger.

Lastly, I ask Allāh (the Majestic and High) that He make our fast and the rest of our actions pure and accepted, and that He make us keen upon His remembrance, gratitude, and perfection of His worship. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1907

[4] Reported by Muslim (1718) and Aḥmad (6/146).

THE EIGHTH LESSON

Clarifying Who is Excused to Leave off Fasting During the Month of Ramaḍān & What is the Obligation Upon Them

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. He has legislated and made it easy.

﴿ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ﴾

And (Allāh) has not laid upon you in religion any hardship.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:78]

And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions, the best of nations, and those who follow them in goodness.

To proceed:

We will explain those who are allowed to break their fast during the month of Ramaḍān and what is obligatory upon them. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا

كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ أَيَّامًا
مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ﴾

O you who believe! Observing *aṣ-ṣawm* (fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious. [Observing *ṣawm* (fasts)] for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:183-184]

These two noble verses show the obligation of fasting upon every Muslim of sound intellect who is free from anything that would prevent them from fasting. Therefore, if they reach the month of Ramaḍān, it is incumbent upon them to fast during the month of Ramaḍān, or to make the days up if they are not able to fast during the month of Ramaḍān due to an excuse from the legislated excuses.

As for those who are excused and are allowed to break their fast, then they are the following individuals:

1) The sick person upon whom fasting is difficult; it is recommended that he breaks his fast and accepts the concession. And this is in the case where fasting will cause him harm, delay his recovery, or increase his illness.

2) The traveler upon whom the month of Ramaḍān came while he was traveling, or who started traveling during the month of Ramaḍān if the distance of travel is 80 kilometers or more, and this is equivalent to the distance that people used to travel by foot and the distance they would carry their loads, a distance of two days.

This is the one who is considered a traveler, and it is recommended for him to break his fast whether the fast is difficult for him or not; he should take the ease. And it is the same if his travel is an emergency travel or if it is a repetitive travel, as in the case of the taxi driver where most of his time is spent traveling between two cities. Therefore, this person breaks his fast and makes the days up when he is not traveling.

And if the traveler returns home during daylight hours, it is obligatory upon him to refrain from eating for the remaining portion of the day and then to make this day up, as previously mentioned.

And if the traveler intends during his travel that his stay will exceed more than four days, then it becomes incumbent upon him to fast and to complete his prayer as the resident would, because his traveling has thus ceased. And it is the same if his stay is for study or for business or other than that.

But if he intends to stay for four days or less, or if he is going to stay to fulfill a need and he does not know when his need will be completed, then he is allowed to break his fast because he is still considered a traveler.

3) The woman who has menses or post-childbirth bleeding; it is not permissible for her to fast as long as she is in one of these two states. This is based upon the narration found in al-Bukhāri and Muslim, the narration from 'Ā'ishah ﵂ wherein she said, "We were ordered with making up the days of our fast." This was her response when a woman asked her, "Why does the menstruating woman make up her fast but does not make up her prayer?" So 'Ā'ishah replied, "We have been commanded to make up our fasting and we have not been commanded to make up our prayers."[1]

And there is a consensus that it is not permissible for the woman to fast while she is menstruating. Shaykhul-Islām ﵀ said, "It is confirmed in the Sunnah and by consensus of the Muslims that the menstruating woman is prohibited from fasting. Therefore, it is not permissible for her or the woman with post-childbirth bleeding to fast."

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[1] Reported by al-Bukhāri (321) and Muslim (335).

And if a woman fasts during this time, her fast is not correct. And this also goes along with reason, because the Islamic legislation came with justice in everything. The fasting of the menstruating woman would cause weakness in her body while her blood is leaving her, so her fasting would not be fair to her. Therefore, she has been ordered to fast when she is not menstruating, in order for her fasting to be fair upon her. So she will not lose blood, the blood that makes the body strong, unlike the menstruating woman.

And whoever vomits against their will, then this does not negate their fasting.

4) The sick individual with a chronic illness that they do not expect to be cured from and which constantly prevents them from fasting; this person breaks his fast and feeds a poor person the equivalent of half a *ṣā'*[2] of wheat or something like this, and he does not have to make the fast up.

5) The elderly or senile person who is not able to fast should break their fast and feed a poor person for every day, and they do not have to make the fast up. (This is the case if the person still has intellect; if the person has lost their sanity, then there is nothing upon them at all.)

6) The pregnant or breastfeeding woman if she fears for herself or for her child that the fast might harm them, then in both cases she should break her fast and make up the days she missed.

If she breaks her fast only fearing for her child, then in addition to making up the missed day, she should feed a poor person for each day. And the proof for the person with a chronic illness, the elderly or senile, and the pregnant or nursing mother to break their fast is the statement of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ﴾

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[2] **Translator's Note**: This unit of measure is approximately 2.6 kilograms of wheat. And Allāh knows best.

> **And as for those who can fast with difficulty (e.g., an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a *miskīn* (poor person) (for every day).**
>
> *[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:184]*

This is the explanation for this verse given by Ibn 'Abbās, and Allāh knows best.

And may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE NINTH LESSON

Clarifying the Virtues of Fasting

All praises belong to Allāh for His many blessings, those which are hidden and those which are apparent. He has legislated for His slaves that which rectifies them and gives them happiness in this world and the next.

And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions, the shining stars of guidance, and upon those who follow his guidance and hold firm to his pure Sunnah.

To proceed:

O Muslims, we shall remind you of the virtues of this blessed month and we ask Allāh to give us success in taking advantage of our time by performing righteous actions, and we ask that He accept them from us and that He forgive us our sins; verily, He is the One Who hears and answers supplications.

It has been reported by al-Bukhāri and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ﵁ from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ that he said:

كل عمل ابن آدم له الحسنة بعشر أمثالها إلى سبعمائة ضعف، قال الله تعالى: إلا الصيام فإنه لي وأنا أجزي به، ترك شهوته وطعامه وشرابه من أجلي، للصائم فرحتان: فرحة عند فطره وفرحة عند لقاء ربه، ولخلوف فم الصائم عند الله أطيب من ريح المسك.

Every action performed by the son of Ādam can be multiplied in his favor from 10 to 70 times, and Allāh the Exalted said: "Except for fasting, because verily it is for Me and I shall reward for it. He (the Muslim) leaves his desires, his food, and his drink for My sake, so the fasting person will have two times of happiness: happiness when he breaks his fast and happiness when he meets his Lord. And the smell that comes from the mouth of the fasting person is better in the sight of Allāh than the fragrance of fine perfume."[1]

So this noble narration mentions various virtues of fasting.

And fasting is distinct from the other acts of worship in the following ways:

- The reward for fasting is multiplied in a way that the other righteous actions are not multiplied. So the reward for fasting is multiplied in a way that is not restricted by a number, whereas the other actions can be multiplied from 10 to 70 times.

- And from the uniqueness of fasting is that the sincerity found in fasting is more than that in the other actions, based on the statement: "He leaves his desires, his food, and his drink for My sake."

- And from the distinction of the fast is that Allāh has specified that the fast is for Him, as opposed to the other actions, and that He is the One Who will give the reward to the fasting person, based on the statement: "Fasting is for Me and I shall reward for it."

- And from the distinction of the fast is that the fasting person will achieve happiness in this life and the next: happiness when he breaks his fast with what Allāh has made permissible for him, and happiness in the next life due to what Allāh has prepared for him of tremendous reward. And this is the happiness that is praiseworthy—that the person is happy with the obedience of Allāh, as Allāh the Exalted said:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1894 and 1904; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1151

﴿ قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا ﴾

Say: "In the bounty of Allāh, and in His mercy; therein let them rejoice."

[Sūrah Yūnus 10:58]

- And also, the effects that fasting leaves which are beloved to Allāh, which is the changing of the odor in the mouth of the fasting person due to his fasting. It is a result that came about due to obeying Allāh, so it is beloved to Allāh the Exalted: "And the smell that comes from the mouth of the fasting person is better in the sight of Allāh than the fragrance of fine perfume."

- And from the virtues of fasting is that Allāh specified a door from the doors of Paradise that no one will enter except the fasting person, as an honor to them, as it appears in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* and *Muslim* from the narration of Sahl bin Sa'd ؓ that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إن في الجنة بابا يقال له الريان يدخل منه الصائمون يوم القيامة، لا يدخل منه أحد غيرهم، يقال أين الصائمون؟ فيقومون فيدخلون فإذا دخلوا أغلق فلم يدخل منه أحد.

Verily, there is in Paradise a door called ar-Rayān; the people who used to fast will enter this door on the Day of Judgment and no one will enter it except them. It will be said, "Where are the fasting people?" So they will enter this door and when they have entered it, it will close and no one else will enter it.[2]

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1896; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1152

- And from the virtues of fasting is that it protects the fasting person from that which will harm him from the sins and it protects him from the harmful desires and the punishment in the Fire, as it comes in the *ḥadīth:*

الصيام جُنَّة.

Fasting is a shield.

Meaning, it is a protective shield from the dangers.

- And from the virtues of fasting is that the supplication of the fasting person is answered, as it comes in the narration from Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

إن للصائم عند فطره دعوة لا ترد.

Verily, the fasting person has a supplication at the time he breaks his fast that will not be rejected.[3]

And Allāh said in the context of verses about fasting:

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ
الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ﴾

> **And when My slaves ask you (O Muḥammad) concerning Me, then (answer them); I am indeed near (to them by My knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:186]*

And this is to incite the fasting person to make a lot of supplication.

- And from its virtues is that all of the actions of the fasting person become worship, as it has been related from Ibn ‘Umar that the Prophet ﷺ said:

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[3] Reported by Ibn Mājah (1753) and by al-Ḥākim in *Al-Mustadrak* (1/422).

صمت الصائم تسبيح ونومه عبادة ودعاؤه مستجاب وعمله مضاعف.

The silence of the fasting person is glorification of Allāh, his sleeping is worship, his supplication is answered, and his actions are multiplied.[4]

- And from the virtues of fasting is that it is a part of patience, as comes in the narration found in *Sunan Ibn Mājah* that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

الصيام نصف الصبر.

Fasting is half of patience.[5]

And Allāh the Exalted has informed us that the patient ones will be given their reward without reckoning.

- And from the virtues of fasting and its good benefits is that it is a reason for a healthy body, as it has been narrated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ:

صوموا تصحوا.

Fast, and you will be healthy.[6]

And this is because fasting protects the apparent and hidden body parts, and it prevents the mixing of the foods that lead to illness.

Fasting has many benefits, and it is not possible to mention all of them; but the intent was just to mention some of them, and we will suffice with this, if Allāh wills.

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[4] Reported by ad-Daylami in *Musnad al-Firdaws* (3576) and al-Hindi in *Kanz al-'Umāl,* who ascribes it to Zakariyyā bin Mandah in *Al-Amāli* (23602).

[5] Reported by Aḥmad (4/260), al-Bayhaqi in *Shu'ab al-Īmān* (7/177 3297), and Ibn Mājah (1745).

[6] Reported by as-Sunni and Abū Nu'aym. Al-Hindi mentioned it in *Kanz al-'Umāl* (32605) and he ascribed it to Ibn as-Sunni, Abū Nu'aym, and al-Ḥāfiẓ al-'Irāqi in the verification of *Al-Iḥyā'* (3/75). Aṭ-Ṭabarāni reported it in *Al-Awsaṭ* and Abū Nu'aym in *Aṭ-Ṭibb an-Nabawi* from the *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurayrah with a weak chain. Aṣ-Ṣāghāni said that it is fabricated.

And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions, and all praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists.

THE TENTH LESSON

Clarifying the Benefits of Fasting

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and upon his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgment.

To proceed:

Verily, fasting is from the most beneficial acts of worship and it is from the acts of worship that have the greatest effect in purifying the soul and rectifying the manners, and it has tremendous benefits. From the greatest of its virtues are as follows:

- It is a reason to grow *taqwā* in the hearts and it refrains the limbs from committing the prohibited acts. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾

O you who believe! Observing *aṣ-ṣawm* (fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those

before you, that you may acquire *taqwā*.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:183]

Therefore, Allāh the Exalted clarified in this verse that He prescribed fasting for His servants in order for them to increase in *taqwā*, and *taqwā* is a comprehensive word for every type of good. Allāh has connected *taqwā* to an abundance of good and numerous benefits, and He mentions it often in His Book due to its importance.

And the people of knowledge have defined *taqwā* as "performing the commandments of Allāh and avoiding His prohibitions, hoping for a reward from Him and fearing His punishment."

As for His statement: "…that you may acquire *taqwā*," Imām al-Qurṭubi رحمه الله said: "The phrase لعل (*la'alla*, that you may...) is that which is requested from them, and *'taqwā'* means to leave off sins."

Because every time food intake is lessened, the desires are lessened, and every time the desires are lessened, sins are lessened. And it has been said that the meaning is general, because fasting is as it was described by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when he said:

الصيام جُنَّة.

Fasting is a shield.

And the reason for [acquiring] *taqwā* is that it (fasting) kills the desires.

- And from the benefits of fasting is that it gives the person patience and steadfastness, because he leaves the familiar and meaningless desires willingly and by choice. And it gives strength to the sinner who is connected to sins; it gives him strength to leave and separate himself from the sins.

Therefore, fasting will cultivate the person upon patience and cause him to forget the sin until he is able to leave it completely.

For example, the smoker who has been dominated by the habit of smoking, and he finds it difficult to quit—by way of fasting, he is able to quit this evil habit and filthy practice with ease, and like this he can leave off the rest of the sins.

- And from the benefits of fasting is that the person is able to conquer his soul, the soul that is inclined towards evil. During the time when the person is eating, he struggles with his soul and he is inclined towards indulging in the impermissible desires; but when he begins fasting, he is able to direct his soul to the truth.

- And from the benefits of fasting is that it is easy for the fasting person to do acts of obedience, and this is obvious because of the fasting person racing towards doing good deeds that he normally would be lazy in performing, and acts of worship that would normally be hard upon him if he was not fasting.

- And from the benefits of fasting is that it softens the heart to the remembrance of Allāh the Exalted and it breaks him away from distractions.

- And from the benefits of fasting is that perhaps it may lead to the person loving acts of obedience and hating sins on a consistent basis, so this will be a starting point for him to correct his understanding and his behavior throughout his life.

And all praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists; and may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE ELEVENTH LESSON

From the Etiquettes of the Fast

All praise is due to Allāh alone; and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, after whom there are no prophets to come, and upon his family and his Companions be peace.

To proceed:

Know that from the important etiquettes of the fast is that the Muslim fasts within the legislated, set time for the fast. So he does not advance it nor does he delay it. And he does not fast before the affirmation of the beginning of the month, nor does he fast after its end. He ﷺ said:

إذا رأيتم الهلال فصوموا وإذا رأيتموه فأفطروا.

When you sight the *hilāl,* then fast, and when you sight it (again), then break your fast.[1]

And he said:

لا تصوموا حتى تروا الهلال ولا تفطروا حتى تروه.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1900; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 8/1080

Do not fast until you sight the *hilāl*, and do not break the fast until you sight it.[2]

So in the first *ḥadīth* is the command to fast with its sighting at the beginning of the month and to break the fast at its end. The meaning of this is that the place of the fast is only between the two crescents (*hilāl*).

In the second *ḥadīth* is the prohibition of fasting before the sighting of the *hilāl* and the prohibition of breaking the fast before its sighting. Preceding the month by fasting with the intention of this fast being from it (the month) has been explicitly prohibited because that is adding to what Allāh ﷻ has legislated. At-Tirmidhi, an-Nasā'i, Ibn Mājah, and Ibn Ḥibbān have narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ:

لا تصوموا قبل رمضان.

Do not fast before Ramaḍān.[3]

And Abū Dāwūd narrated from him:

لا تقدموا الشهر بصيام يوم ولا يومين.

Do not precede the month with fasting by a day or two days.[4]

It is due to this that the prohibition of fasting on the day of doubt (*yawm ash-shakk*) has come. 'Ammār said, "Whoever fasts on the day in which he doubts (about the entrance of the month), then he has disobeyed Abū Qāsim ﷺ."[5]

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ said, "This is because of the principle and the apparent absence of the *hilāl*. So fasting it is preceding the month of Ramaḍān by a day, and the Prophet ﷺ has prohibited it. The principles of the legislation prove this saying as opposed to other than it, for that which contains doubt regarding its obligation is not obligatory to act upon nor is it recommended. Rather, abandoning it is recommended out of precaution, for the principles of the *sharīʿah* do not prohibit precaution nor do they obligate it merely due to doubt."

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1906; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 3/1080

[3] Reported by at-Tirmidhi (687) and he said: "The *ḥadīth* of Ibn 'Abbās is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ*."

[4] Reported by Aḥmad (1/158 226), ad-Dārimi (1690), at-Tirmidhi (688), and Ibn Khuzaymah (1912).

[5] Reported by Abū Dāwūd (2334) and at-Tirmidhi (686), and he authenticated it and said, "Most of the people of knowledge act upon it."

From this, we know the falsehood of the call of those who call us to depend on astronomical calculations in our fasting and for breaking the fast. By that, they call us to fast and break our fast before the sighting of the *hilāl* so that we precede the month of Ramaḍān by a day or two and fast the day of doubt, and other than that from the matters we have been warned about.

From the etiquettes of the fast is to delay the *suḥūr* if one does not fear the appearance of the second Fajr, due to the saying of Zayd bin Thābit ﵁: "We ate the *suḥūr* with the Prophet ﷺ then stood for the prayer." [The sub-narrator] said, "How much time was between them?" He said, "Enough time to recite 50 verses."[6]

And in the *ḥadīth* of Abū Dharr (the Prophet said):

لا تزال أمتي بخير ما أخروا السحور وعجلوا الفطور.

My nation will continue to be upon good as long as they delay the *suḥūr* and hasten the breaking of the fast.[7]

This is because that is better for the fast. And Allāh says:

﴿ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ
الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ﴾

And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn

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[6] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1921; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1097

[7] Reported by Aḥmad (5/172) and aṭ-Ṭaḥāwi in *Sharḥ Maʿāni al-Āthār* (1/140).

appears to you distinct from the black thread.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

What is intended by this is the blackness of the night and the whiteness of the day. Some of the people stay awake for most of the night, so when they want to sleep, they eat the *suḥūr* then sleep and abandon the Fajr prayer. These people have fasted before the time for the fast and they abandoned the Fajr prayer, and they have not fulfilled the commands of Allāh. Where is the cognizance of these people regarding their religion, their fast, and their prayer if they do not fulfill (the commands) as long as they give their souls what they desire?

And from the etiquettes of the fast is hastening to break the fast when the setting of the sun is confirmed, due to his ﷺ saying:

لا تزال أمتي بخير ما أخروا السحور وعجلوا الفطور.

The people will continue to be upon goodness as long as they hasten the breaking of the fast.

Meaning: The affair of this *ummah* will continue to be great and they will be upon goodness as long as they preserve this Sunnah.

Also from the etiquettes of the fast is that one breaks his fast with fresh dates, and if he does not find any, then with dried dates. This is because he ﷺ "...used to break his fast with fresh dates before he would pray. If there were none, then with dried dates; and if there were no dried dates, then he would take some handfuls of water."[8]

Exaggeration when breaking the fast by presenting various types of foods and drinks is not proper. This is because it is in opposition to the Sunnah and distracts one from the congregational prayer.

And may Allāh bestow prayers and peace upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

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[8] Reported by Abū Dāwūd (3256), at-Tirmidhi (543), Aḥmad (3/164), and al-Ḥākim in *Al-Mustadrak* (1/432). Al-Ḥākim said, "It is *ṣaḥīḥ* upon the conditions of Muslim." Adh-Dhahabi was silent regarding it.

THE TWELFTH LESSON

Clarifying What is Forbidden for the Fasting Person

All praise is due to Allāh for His bounty and perfection. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the caller to His pleasure, and upon his family, Companions, and those who follow his guidance and hold fast to his Sunnah until the Day of Recompense.

To proceed:

Know that the fast has etiquettes which are obligatory to observe and adorn one's self with, in order for the fast to be in accordance with the legislative intent so that you may derive its benefit and attain the objective from it, and so that it is not a difficulty upon its companion without benefit. As the Prophet ﷺ said:

رب صائم ليس له من صيامه إلا الجوع.

Perhaps the fasting person does not have anything from his fast except hunger.[1]

So the fast is not merely abandoning food and drink only. Along with that is abandoning what is not befitting from statements and actions that are forbidden or disliked.

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[1] Reported by Ibn Mājah (1690), and by an-Nasā'i in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā* (4/27).

Some of the Salaf said, “The most insignificant part of the fast is to abandon food and drink,” for nearness to Allāh is not completed by abandoning permissible desires except after nearness to Him by abandoning what Allāh has forbidden in all instances. And it is obligatory for the Muslim to abandon what is forbidden in every time, but in the time of fasting it is more emphasized. So the one who does the forbidden in other than the time of fasting is sinning and deserves punishment, and if he did it during the time of fasting, then along with the sin and justification of the punishment, it has an effect on his fast by depreciating or nullifying it.

The true fasting person is the one whose stomach fasts from food and drink, his limbs fast from sins, his tongue fasts from evil and foul speech, his hearing fasts from music, musical stringed and wind instruments, and from backbiting and tale-carrying speech; and his sight fasts from looking at forbidden things.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

من لم يدع قول الزور والعمل به فليس لله حاجة في أن يدع طعامه وشرابه.

Whoever does not leave vile speech and action, then Allāh has no need for him leaving his food and drink.[2]

It is obligatory upon the fasting person to avoid backbiting, tale-carrying, and abuse, due to what the two Shaykhs have narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ, that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم فلا يرفث ولا يجهل، فإن امرؤ قاتله أو شاتمه فليقل إني صائم.

When one of you is fasting, then do not behave insolently or

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1903

ignorantly. If one seeks to fight him or abuse him, then let him say, "Verily, I am fasting."[3]

And in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* on the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه in a *marfū'* form (the Prophet said):

الصيام جنة فإذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم فلا يرفث ولا يفسق ولا يجهل، فإن سابه أحد فليقل إني امرؤ صائم.

Fasting is a shield. So when one of you is fasting, then let him not behave insolently, sinfully, or ignorantly. So if someone abuses him, then let him say, "Verily, I am one who is fasting."[4]

Al-junnah (the shield), with a *ḍammah* on the (letter) *jīm*, acts as a barrier for its companion, preventing the weapon of someone else from afflicting him. So the fast preserves its companion from falling into disobedience, the end result of which is torment now and in the Hereafter.

Ar-rafth: It is obscenity and vile speech. Imām Aḥmad and others narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in a *marfū'* form:

إن الصيام جنة ما لم يخرقها قيل بم يخرقها؟ قال: بكذب أو غيبة.

"Fasting is a shield as long as one does not pierce it." It was said, "With what does one pierce it?" He said, "With lying or backbiting."[5]

So in this is an evidence that backbiting pierces the fast; meaning: it has an effect on it. And when the shield is pierced, it does not benefit its companion. Likewise, when the fast is pierced, it does not benefit its companion. And *al-ghībah* (backbiting), as Allāh's Messenger ﷺ has clarified it, is:

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1894; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1151

[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1904; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1151

[5] Reported by an-Nasā'i (4/167 2231), Aḥmad in *Al-Musnad* (1/195-196), Abū Ya'lā in *Al-Musnad* (2/181 878), and al-Bayhaqi in *Ash-Shu'ab* (7/173 3294).

ذكرك أخاك بما يكره.

To mention your brother with that which he dislikes.[6]

And it has also come that it (*al-ghībah*) breaks the fast, as it has come in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad: "Two women were fasting during the time of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. They nearly died from thirst; so that was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ, yet he disregarded them. Then they were mentioned to him, so he summoned them and ordered them to make themselves vomit. Meaning, to empty the contents of their bellies. So they vomited, filling a bowl with pus, pus-filled blood, and chunks of flesh. So the Prophet ﷺ said:

إن هاتين صامتا عما حل الله لهما، وأفطرتا على ما حرم الله عليهما، جلست إحداهما إلى الأخرى فجعلتا تأكلان من لحوم الناس.

These two have fasted from what Allāh has made *ḥalāl* for them and broken their fast with what Allāh has made *ḥarām* for them. One of them would sit with the other and begin to eat from the flesh of the people.[7]

What occurred from these two women with the Messenger—the vomiting of these disgusting and foul things—is from that which Allāh caused to occur at the hand of His Messenger from the *mu'jizāt* (miracles) to clarify to the people the ugly effects of *al-ghībah*. And Allāh has said:

﴿ وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ
لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ﴾

And do no backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? He would hate it, so fear Allāh.

[Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt 49:12]

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[6] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2589, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 4874, and *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 1934.

[7] *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* 5/431

This *ḥadīth* has proven that *al-ghībah* breaks the fast, and it is a figurative nullifier. Its meaning is that it is a nullification of the reward, according to the majority of the scholars.

And may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE THIRTEENTH LESSON

Clarifying What is Disliked for the Fasting Person

All praise and thanks are due to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists; He has specified the fast for Himself out of all other actions. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and upon his family and Companions, the choicest of families and companions.

To proceed:

Know that the fasting person is engaged in a great act of worship, in which it is not proper to defile its purity with that which disturbs it from inappropriate statements and actions. This is because he is in worship as long as he is fasting—even in his state of sleep, if he intends by it to gain strength for fasting and the night prayer, then his sleep is worship. Therefore, it is not befitting that he be involved with affairs that are not appropriate along with this act of worship. Due to this, when the Salaf aṣ-Ṣāliḥ would fast, they would sit in the *masjid* and say, "We are preserving our fast and are not backbiting anyone." This was out of diligence from them upon the preservation of their fast.

It is incumbent upon the fasting person to constantly be in the *masjid*, because he is in need of practicing (righteous) actions. He is in need of it. He needs them in his life. However, it is obligatory upon him to preserve the sanctity of his fast wherever he may be. So forbidden for him is the uttering of vulgarities from speech, such as abuse and cursing; even if someone were to abuse or curse him, he should not respond to him in the same way. This is due to his ﷺ statement, in that which the two Shaykhs have reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ:

إذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم فلا يرفث ولا يجهل، فإن امرؤ قاتله أو شاتمه فليقل إني صائم.

When one of you is fasting, then do not behave insolently or ignorantly. If one seeks to fight him or abuse him, then let him say, "Verily, I am fasting."[1]

And al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqi have narrated from him:

ليس الصيام من الأكل والشرب إنما الصيام من اللغو والرفث، فإن سابك أحد أو جهل عليك فقل: إني صائم.

The fast is not refraining from eating and drinking. Verily, the fast is refraining from vain speech and insolence. So if someone abuses you or behaves ignorantly with you, then say, "Verily, I am fasting."[2]

So these narrations prove that it is imperative upon the fasting person to be diligent in safeguarding his fast and preserving it. And if someone transgresses against him by hitting or cursing him, then it is not permissible for him to respond in kind, even though equality is permissible. However, in a state of fasting, he is prohibited from that, and he is to say, "Verily, I am fasting." And if that is not permissible in retribution, then to initiate it is more severe and greater in terms of sin, because transgression is forbidden in all times. As Allāh the Exalted has stated:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1894; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1151

[2] Reported by al-Ḥākim in *Al-Mustadrak* (1/431), al-Bayhaqi in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā* (4/270), and ad-Daylami in *Musnad al-Firdaws* (5224). Al-Ḥākim said, "It is *ṣaḥīḥ* based upon the conditions of Muslim, although they did not report it." Adh-Dhahabi agreed with him.

﴿ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴾

And do not transgress the limits; verily, Allāh loves not the transgressors.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:190]

Transgression while in a state of fasting is more severe in terms of repulsiveness and greater in terms of sin. So it is obligatory upon the fasting person to guard his tongue from that which contains no good of speech, such as lying, backbiting, tale-carrying, cursing, and every abominable speech. Likewise, he safeguards himself and his body from the rest of the desires and forbidden matters due to the generality of his ﷺ statement:

من لم يدع قول الزور والعمل به فليس لله حاجة في أن يدع طعامه وشرابه.

Whoever does not leave vile speech and action, then Allāh has no need for him leaving his food and drink.[3]

And his ﷺ statement, "So do not behave insolently or evilly."

The reality of the fast and its objective is breaking the soul from [following] desires, and strengthening one's protection from the Shayṭān and his helpers. Some of the scholars have said: "It is incumbent upon him that he fast with all of his limbs—with his private parts, his eyes, his tongue, and his heart. So he does not backbite nor does he curse; he does not dispute nor does he lie or waste his time with *anāshīd*, poetry or storytelling, comedy, or lauding and criticism without right. Nor does he extend his hand toward falsehood."

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1903

And the scholars also said: “Just as *al-ghībah* is done with the tongue, it is also done with other than it, such as innuendos with the eyes, hands, and lips.”

The reward of the fast is decreased by disobedience, even if it is not nullified by it. So the fasting person does not attain the reward for undergoing fatigue by hunger and thirst because he has not fasted the fast that is legislatively sought from him by abandoning the forbidden matters.

The Prophet ﷺ commanded for the fasting person to say when he is cursed: “Verily, I am fasting.” Its apparent meaning is that he says this with his tongue as a proclamation of what prevents him from responding to the one who cursed him, which is the fast. In that is a curtailing of evil and a reminder to himself and the cursing person of the sanctity of the fast, so that he may repel his disputation with what is better.

This is the case, and we ask Allāh عَزَّ وَجَلَّ to make us steadfast upon the preservation of our fast from the nullifiers and things that decrease it, and to give us *tawfīq* upon good actions and the abandonment of evil.

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists; may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE FOURTEENTH LESSON

Clarifying the First Invalidator of the Fast

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation. He ordered with correcting the actions, and He forbade nullifying them. As Allāh the Most High said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلَا
تُبْطِلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴾

O you who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger (Muḥammad) and render not vain your deeds.

[Sūrah Muḥammad 47:33]

And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

As for what follows:

Know that it is obligatory to explain the corrupters of the fast so that the Muslim will know them, be distant from them, and fear them.

These corrupters are of two types:

1) The first type is what nullifies the fast and requires completion of the missed fast with it.

2) The second type is what corrupts the reward of the fast and doesn't require making up the fast.

So the corrupters that nullify the fast and make expiation necessary are of several types.

The First Invalidator: Intercourse

When the fasting person has intercourse during the day in Ramaḍān, he nullifies his fast, and it is upon him to abstain for the rest of the day, repent to Allāh and seek forgiveness, and to complete this day in which he has had intercourse. And upon him is the expiation (*kaffārah*), which is freeing a slave, and if he cannot find one, then fasting two months consecutively, and if he cannot, then feeding 60 poor people, giving each poor person half a *ṣā'* of wheat or anything else which is eaten as food in the customs of the people in that area.

And the one who can't fast is the one who is unable to fast for a legal reason, and this doesn't mean the one who finds it difficult to fast. The proof for that is what has been confirmed in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, and other than them, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, who said: "A desert man came to the Messenger of Allāh and said, 'I am destroyed, I am destroyed.' He said:

وما أهلكك؟

" 'What has destroyed you?'

"He said, 'I entered upon my wife in Ramaḍān.' So the Prophet said:

هل تجد ما تعتق به رقبة؟

" 'Do you have what will free a slave?'

"He said, 'No.' The Prophet said:

فهل تستطيع أن تصوم شهرين متتابعين؟

“‘So can you fast two consecutive months?’

“He said, ‘No.’ The Prophet said:

فهل تجد ما تطعم ستين مسكينا؟

“‘Do you find what will feed 60 poor people?’

“He said, ‘No.’ Then he sat down and the Prophet was brought a basket of dates. He said:

تصدق بهذا.

“‘Give this in charity.’

“So [the man] said, ‘To someone poorer than us? There is no one between its two lava plains (meaning, in Madīnah) in more need of this than my household.’ The Prophet laughed to the point that his molar teeth became visible; then he said:

اذهب فأطعمه أهلك.

“‘Go and feed your family.’”[1]

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah ﵏ has mentioned that intercourse bears resemblance to menstruation and cupping in respect to it being an emptying, and it bears resemblance to eating and drinking in respect to it being a desire. And he ﵏ said, “As for intercourse, considering that it is a means for the release of sperm, it takes the same course as self-induced vomiting, menstruation, and cupping, because it is a type of emptying. And regarding it being one of the two desires, then it takes the same course as eating and drinking, as the Prophet reported from his Lord that He said about the fasting person:

يدع طعامه وشرابه من أجلي.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 936; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1111

He leaves his food and drink for My sake.[2]

"So the person's leaving off of what he desires for the sake of Allāh is worship that is intended and rewarded. Intercourse is from the most major of the bodily delights, pleasures of the soul, and means to its happiness, and it incites the desires, the blood, and the body more than food. So seeing as the Shayṭān goes through the son of Ādam in his bloodstream, and nourishment increases the blood and incites his soul towards desires, then this notion is even greater for intercourse, because it expands the soul's intention to satisfy desires and it busies it with this intention at the expense of worship.

"Rather, intercourse is the most extreme of the desires, and the desire for it is greater than the desire for food and drink, and for this reason, the one who has intercourse is required to do a *kaffārah* (expiation) of *ẓihār*. So he is required to free a slave or to do what takes its place, by the Sunnah and by consensus of the scholars, because this is more difficult and its causes are stronger, and the cause of evil is more severe. So this is the greater of the two wisdoms in forbidding intercourse, and as for it weakening the body by way of emptying it out, then this is another wisdom. So here it becomes like self-induced vomiting or menstruation, while being more intense than them both. Its corruption of the fast is more intense than the corruption of eating and menstruation." And here ends his speech رحمه الله.

And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1894; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1151

THE FIFTEENTH LESSON

Clarifying the Second & Third Invalidators of the Fast

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and upon his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in good until the Day of Judgment.

To proceed:

Know that Allāh has permitted the fasting person to enjoy his family during the night of the fast. So Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ ﴾

It is made lawful for you to approach your wives on the night of *aṣ-ṣawm* (fasting).

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

And "approach" is another way of saying sexual intercourse, and it is said that "approach" is a comprehensive word for every way the man wants to enjoy his wife.

Therefore, specifying this during the night shows that it is not permissible for the fasting person during the day in Ramaḍān. And it has already been mentioned about the one who has intercourse with his spouse during the day of Ramaḍān and the large atonement he has to make, and this is from the proofs that affirm for the Muslim that he should avoid falling into these prohibited things, to avoid negating his fast.

The Second Invalidator of the Fast:

The second invalidator of the fast is for seminal fluid to exit from the body without having sexual intercourse; rather, in this case, it exits the body due to kissing, hugging, masturbation, or repeated looks (at that which arouses).

Therefore, if sexual fluid exits from the fasting person in this manner, then his fast is invalid and it is obligatory upon him to refrain from eating the remainder of the day, and he has to make up this day.

There is no atonement upon him, but he must repent to Allāh and feel regret, and seek the forgiveness of Allāh. And he must avoid those things that arouse his desires, because he is involved in a tremendous act of worship (meaning, the fast of Ramaḍān). And he is commanded to leave his desires, his food, and his drink for the sake of Allāh the Exalted.

As for the sleeping person, if he emits seminal fluid while asleep, then this has no effect upon his fast and there is nothing upon him (meaning, he does not have make this day up) because this occurrence was out of his control. He only has to take the ritual shower, as is known.

The Third Invalidator of the Fast:

The third invalidator of the fast is eating or drinking on purpose, based upon the statement of Allāh the Exalted:

﴿ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ

الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ﴾

And eat and drink until the white thread (light) of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread (darkness of night).

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

Therefore, Allāh the Exalted has allowed eating and drinking until the rising of the second dawn (meaning, the time of Fajr prayer). Then, after this time, He has ordered us to fast until the night, and this is the meaning of leaving food and drink during this time between the rising of the dawn until the night.

And the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has narrated from His Lord the Exalted that He said concerning the fast:

يدع طعامه وشرابه من أجلي.

He leaves his food and drink for My sake.[1]

And that which is similar to food and drink is any portion of food or drink that reaches the stomach from a path other than the nose.

This also includes anything which is liquid or solid that reaches the stomach, such as taking an intravenous supplement for nutrition or taking medicine and injecting blood into the fasting person in order to strengthen him.

All of these things invalidate the fast because it is either nourishment which takes the place of food or medicine which goes through the throat to the stomach, and this takes the ruling of food and drink also, as has been narrated by many of the scholars of Islamic *fiqh*, may Allāh have mercy upon them.

As for the injection that is not considered to be nourishment, then if it is injected by way of the vein, then what is apparent is that it invalidates the fast, because it will run through the bloodstream and enter the stomach; and if it is taken through the muscles, then it is more befitting to leave it, based upon the statement of the Messenger of Allāh:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1894; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1151

دع ما يريبك إلى ما لا يريبك.

Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.[2]

And whoever has to take some of the aforementioned medicines due to an illness and he is not able to wait until nighttime, then he takes the medicine and makes the day up, because he is sick. And Allāh has allowed for the sick person to break their fast and to make the days up during other days.

And some of the scholars of Islamic *fiqh* consider using eyeliner (kohl) as something that will invalidate the fast, because it will penetrate the throat and the fasting person will find the taste of the eyeliner in his throat most of the time. Therefore, it is not befitting for the fasting person to use eyeliner during the day of Ramaḍān, and this is from the means of guarding and staying away from the doubtful matters; and Allāh knows best.

And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

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[2] Reported by an-Nasā'i (5727), Aḥmad (1/200), Ibn 'Adi in *Al-Kāmil* (1/203), aṭ-Ṭabarāni in *Aṣ-Ṣaghīr* (32), and at-Tirmidhi (2518), who said, "It is a *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*." Al-Haythami said in *Majma' az-Zawā'id* (4/74), "A *ḥasan* chain."

THE SIXTEENTH LESSON

Clarifying the Fourth & Fifth Invalidators of the Fast

All praises belong to Allāh, the Possessor of virtue and blessings; He has made the fast a shield from sins. And may peace and blessings be upon Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions, the best of people.

To proceed:

The Fourth Invalidator of the Fast:

Blood leaving from the fasting person by way of cupping, bleeding, or withdrawing blood to donate blood or for treating the sick, and things like this. And this is based on the statement of the Messenger of Allāh:

أَفْطَرَ الْحَاجِمُ وَالْمَحْجُومُ.

The one who performs the cupping and the one who is cupped have broken their fast.[1]

And many similar *aḥādīth* have come with this meaning. Ibn

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[1] Classed as *ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Albani in *Ṣaḥīḥ Abī Dāwūd* (2074).

Khuzaymah said, "This information has been authenticated from the Messenger of Allāh."

And Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: "The statement that cupping invalidates the fast is the methodology of most of the scholars of *ḥadīth* such as Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Ibn Khuzaymah, and Ibn Mundhir; and the scholars of *ḥadīth* are the closest people to following the Messenger of Allāh, and this agrees with the foundations and it agrees with deductive reasoning. And those who don't view cupping as an invalidator of the fast, use as an argument what can be found in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*: that the Messenger of Allāh practiced cupping while he was fasting, and during Ḥajj. But scholars such as Aḥmad and other than him have criticized the addition to this narration, the addition being, 'while he was fasting.' So they say it has been affirmed that he practiced cupping while he was on Ḥajj, but (Imām) Aḥmad said that the addition 'while he was fasting' is not correct. And that which was mentioned by Aḥmad is what the two Shaykhs (Bukhāri and Muslim) have agreed upon. And for this reason, (Imām) Muslim rejected the addition and he [only] authenticated that he practiced cupping while he was on Ḥajj."

As for blood exiting from the fasting person unintentionally, such as through a nosebleed or the blood from surgery or a tooth extraction and the like, then this does not affect the fast, because the person is excused in these cases. But they should be careful not to swallow the blood in the case of a tooth extraction.

The Fifth Invalidator of the Fast: Vomiting

And this is the removal of the contents of the stomach—food and drink—by way of the mouth, intentionally. And this is based on the statement of the Messenger of Allāh:

وَمَنْ اسْتَقَاءَ عَمْدًا فَلْيَقْضِ.

Whoever intentionally vomits, let him make up the day of fasting.[2]

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[2] *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 720

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said, "So he forbade expelling (from the body) that which gives it strength and nourishment like food and drink, because expelling it will surely weaken the body. Therefore, if he were allowed to do this, he would harm his body and thus he would be oppressive and unjust in his worship."

As for the one who vomits unintentionally, then this does not affect his fast, based upon the statement of the Messenger of Allāh:

مَنْ ذَرَعَهُ الْقَيْءُ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ قَضَاءٌ.

Whoever vomits unintentionally does not have to make the day up.[3]

And from the things that the fasting person is prohibited from is excessively taking water into his mouth and nose when performing ablution. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

وَبَالِغْ فِي الاسْتِنْشَاقِ إِلا أَنْ تَكُونَ صَائِمًا.

Inhale water deeply (during ablution), unless you are fasting.[4]

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said, "And this is because inhaling water into the nostrils will cause water to enter the throat and then the stomach, just as it does when the person takes water into his mouth, and this will nourish his body and quench his thirst by drinking this water."

And it is allowed for the fasting person to cool off by taking a shower, washing their entire body; and he should avoid allowing water to enter his stomach. And the fasting person who eats or drinks due to forgetfulness, then there is nothing upon them, based upon the statement of the Messenger of Allāh:

مَنْ نَسِيَ وَهُوَ صَائِمٌ, فَأَكَلَ أَوْ شَرِبَ, فَلْيُتِمَّ صَوْمَهُ, فَإِنَّمَا أَطْعَمَهُ اَللَّهُ

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[3] *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 720

[4] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2366

وَسَقَاهُ.

Whoever forgets that he is fasting and eats or drinks, then he should complete his fast, because it was only Allāh that fed him or gave him drink.[5]

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[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1155

THE SEVENTEENTH LESSON

Clarifying the Rulings Regarding Making Up the Fast

All praise is due to Allāh, Who has legislated and made His legislation easy. Allāh says:

﴿ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ﴾

And He has not placed upon you any hardship in the religion.

[Sūrah al-Ḥajj 22:78]

May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, his Companions, and his followers up until the Day of Recompense.

To proceed:

Know that it is obligatory upon you to have knowledge of the rulings of making up the fast, in relation to the one who breaks his fast during the daytime of Ramaḍān due to an excuse from the legislated excuses. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ

ۖ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا
الْعِدَّةَ ﴾

And whoever is ill or on a journey, then the same number (should be made up) from other days. Allāh intends ease for you and He does not intend difficulty. (And He wants that) you should complete the number of days.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

At the end of this noble verse, Allāh permits breaking the fast for the infirm and the traveler, and He obligates upon them making up (the missed days) if they take the concession and break their fast, and for them to fast the number of days in which they broke their fast in another month. If they fast Ramaḍān and do not take the concession, then their fast is correct and they will be rewarded for it, according to the majority of the people of knowledge, and this is what is correct.

And He, Glorified be He, clarified the wisdom for this concession, which is that He intends ease for His slaves and does not intend for them difficulty and hardship by obliging them to fast in a state of travel and illness. Also, the wisdom in obligating making it up is to complete the number of days for which Allāh has obligated the fast. So, in this concession, He combines ease and completion of the number for which fasting is required. They are the third class of those who are permitted to break the fast: the decrepitly old person and the chronically ill, if they do not have the ability to fast. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ﴾

And as for those who can fast with difficulty (e.g., an old man), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a *miskīn* (poor person).

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:184]

The meaning of "fast with difficulty" is: They take pains to fast while it is a hardship upon them. So upon them, instead of fasting, is to feed a poor person for each day. And this is based upon what a group of *tafsīr* scholars has proceeded upon regarding the verse, and that it has not been abrogated.

Likewise, in connection to these is the pregnant and the breastfeeding woman, if she fears for herself or her child (some harm) from the fast, as it has been narrated from Ibn 'Abbās that he said to an *umm walad* (slave girl who bears a child for her owner) of his who was pregnant or breastfeeding: "You are of the level of those who are not able to fast." It has been narrated from Ibn 'Umar that one of his daughters sent to him asking about the fast of Ramaḍān while pregnant. He said, "She breaks the fast and feeds a poor person for each day."

It is permitted for each of these [categories of people] to break the fast during the day of Ramaḍān, considering their Islamic legislative excuses; thereafter, they are divided into three categories:

1) A category upon whom only making up the fast is binding, and there is no *fidyah* (redemption) due upon them. They are the infirm, the traveler, and the pregnant or breastfeeding woman if she fears for herself.

2) A category upon whom only a *fidyah* is obligatory and making up the fast is not obligatory. They are the decrepitly old or the one who is ill and it is not hoped that he will be cured.

3) A category upon whom both making up the fast and a *fidyah* are binding. They are the pregnant and breastfeeding women if they only fear for their child. The *fidyah* here is feeding a poor person half a *ṣā'* of the food of the land for every day [they miss].

Thus, our religion is ease and lenience, compatible with the situation of the individual, and it does not hold him accountable for that which he does not have the ability to do or which is a hardship upon him to the point that it is extremely difficult and unbearable. For the resident, there are rulings that have been legislated that are appropriate for him, and for the traveler, there are appropriate rulings. For the healthy one, appropriate rulings have been legislated, and for the infirm, that which is appropriate for him has been legislated.

The meaning of this is that the Muslim is not exempt from the worship of Allāh in all of his circumstances, and the obligatory matters are not removed from him conclusively. However, they are adapted according to his situation.

Allāh the Exalted says:

﴿ وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ ﴾

And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty (death).

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:99]

﴿ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴾

And ʿĪsā said, in that which Allāh has mentioned concerning him: "And He has commanded me with prayer and charity for all of my life."

[Sūrah Maryam 19:31]

From mankind is he who desires to exploit the lenience of Islām with an evil exploitation, so he allows himself to do the forbidden things and to leave off the obligations, and he says, "The religion is easy." Yes, the religion is surely easy; however, that does not mean that a person can exempt himself from its rulings and follow the desires of his soul. The meaning of the lenience of Islām is that it removes the slave from a state of difficult acts of worship to easy acts of worship which he is able to perform in a case wherein he has an excuse. From that is the removal of the people who have legislative excuses from the fast performed in Ramaḍān to the fast of making it up in another month when their excuses are removed;

or removal of them from the fast to feeding the poor if they are not able to make it up. So it has combined for them the performance of the obligation and exemption from the hardship and sin.

To Allāh belongs all praise and gratitude. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE EIGHTEENTH LESSON

Clarifying the Rulings of Making Up Missed Days

All praise is due to Allāh, the One Who said:

> ﴿ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ ﴾
>
> **And whoever is ill or on a journey, then the same number (should be made up) from other days. Allāh intends ease for you and He does not intend difficulty. (And He wants that) you should complete the number of days.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]*

May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his noble and eminent Companions.

To proceed:

Know that whoever breaks his fast in Ramaḍān due to a permissible reason, such as the legislative excuses that permit the breaking of the fast, or due to a forbidden reason, such as the one who nullifies his fast by sexual intercourse or other than it, then it is obligatory for him to make up his fast due to His statement:

﴿ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ﴾

Then the same number (must be made up) from other days.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:184]

And it is recommended for him to take the initiative in making up his fast, to free himself of blame; and it is recommended that the making up be consecutive (if there are multiple days), because making up the fast resembles the actual performance (of the fast). Even if he does not make the fast up immediately after Ramaḍān, he must have the firm determination to do so. It is permissible for him to delay it because the time for it is broad, and it is permissible to delay any obligation whose time frame is broad, while having firm resolve upon it.

Likewise, it is permissible to break it up (i.e., the days) by fasting on different days. However, if there only remains in Sha'bān the number of days that are due upon him, then it is obligatory upon him to fast them all consecutively, due to the time restraint; and it is not permissible to delay it until after the next Ramaḍān for no valid reason. This is due to the statement of 'Ā'ishah ﵂:

كَانَ يَكُونُ عَلَيَّ الصَّوْمُ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فَمَا أَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ أَقْضِيَهُ إِلَّا فِي شَعْبَانَ، الشُّغُلُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

There was upon me some fasting of Ramaḍān (to make up), but I was not able to make it up until Sha'bān due to my duties to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.[1]

This proves that the time of making up the fast extends until there does not remain from Sha'bān any more than the number of days that are upon him; so it is obligatory upon him to fast them before the entrance of the new Ramaḍān. If he delays making it up until the new Ramaḍān comes upon him, then he fasts the present Ramaḍān and makes up what is due upon him afterwards. Then, if his delaying was due to an excuse with which he was not able to make it up in that time period, then there is nothing upon him except to make up (the days missed). If it was for no (legitimate) excuse, then it is obligatory upon him, in addition to making it up, to feed a poor person half a *ṣā'* from the food of the land for every day missed.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1146

If one upon whom there is making up (of the missed days) dies before the new Ramaḍān, then there is nothing upon him, because he was allowed to delay making up those fasts in that time period in which he died. If he dies after the new Ramaḍān has come, then if his delay was due to an excuse like illness or travel until the new Ramaḍān came upon him, then there is nothing due on him as well. If his delay was for no reason, then due upon him is expiation posthumously, because the feeding of a poor person for each day has gone from him.

If one upon whom there is fasting of expiation dies, such as fasting as an expiation for *aẓ-ẓihār* (declaring one's wife to be like his mother, i.e., forbidden for him) and the obligatory fast for the blood of the game during Ḥajj, then one must feed a poor person for each day (for the deceased), and it is not to be fasted. The feeding is from his wealth that he left behind, because it is a fast to which proxy does not apply in (one's) lifetime, so (it does not apply) after death. This is the statement of most of the people of knowledge.

If one dies while fasting for a vow is due upon him, it is recommended for his heir to fast for him, due to what has been affirmed in the *Saḥīḥayn*:

أَنَّ امْرَأَةً، أَتَتْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ـ صلى الله عليه وسلم ـ فَقَالَتْ إِنَّ أُمِّي ماتَتْ
وَعَلَيْهَا صِيَامُ نَذْرٍ، أفأصومُ عنها؟ قَالَ نَعَم.

A woman came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "My mother has died while due upon her was a fast for a vow she had made. So should I fast for her?" He said, "Yes."[2]

The *walī* (guardian) is the inheritor. Imām Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said, "The fast of the vow is fasted for him as opposed to the obligatory fast. This is the *madhhab* of Aḥmad and others. That which has been textually transmitted from Ibn 'Abbās and 'Ā'ishah is that it is binding (upon the heir) based upon analogy, because the vow is not obligatory by the foundation of the legislation. The slave has obligated it upon himself, so it has become of the same status as the debt. Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ likened it to a debt.

"As for the fast that Allāh has obligated, it is one of the pillars of Islām, so proxy does not apply to it at all, just as it does not apply to the prayer and the two testimonies. The objective of them is the obedience of the slave with himself, and his establishing, by the right of *al-'ubūdiyyah* (true worship), that for which he was created and commanded with. And no one performs this besides him and no one prays in his stead."

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said, "A poor person is fed on his behalf for each day. Aḥmad, Isḥāq, and others took to this (opinion). It is what investigation necessitates, just as it is what the narration obligates. So if the vow is affirmed to be his liability, then it is done after his death. As for the fast of Ramaḍān, then Allāh has not obligated it upon one who is not able to perform it. Rather, he has commanded the one who is not able [to fast] with payment by feeding a poor person. Making up the fast is for the one who is able to do so, not the one who is unable. So one does not need to make it up for someone else. As for the fast of a vow or other than it from the oaths, then it is done on his behalf, with there being no difference of opinion concerning it due to the authentic *aḥādīth*."

And may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 1953; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1148

THE NINETEENTH LESSON

The Tarāwīḥ Prayer & Its Rulings

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation. He legislated for His servants during the month of Ramaḍān categories of acts of obedience, and He urged them to seize the spoils from their time. And may peace and salutations be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the first of the forerunners to goodness, and upon his family and Companions, and whoever follows them in righteousness.

As for what follows:

Know, may Allāh give me and you success, that from what has been legislated for you by the Prophet of guidance, Muḥammad ﷺ, in this blessed month is the Tarāwīḥ prayer, and it is an emphasized Sunnah. It is called "Tarāwīḥ" because the people would take rests during it between every four units of prayer[1] because they would prolong the *ṣalāh*, and its performance in congregation in the *masjid* is preferred. And certainly, the Prophet ﷺ used to pray them in the *masjid* some nights and then he hesitated to pray them, fearing that it would be made obligatory on the people, as was confirmed in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* on the authority of 'Ā'ishah ؓ:

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[1] Meaning, between every two *taslīm* (the sending of *salām* by which one exits the *ṣalāh*), because the Tarāwīḥ is two and two, and likewise the Tahajjud (night vigil) prayer. And some of the *imāms* of the *masjid* erred—those who did not have *fiqh* (jurisprudence) with them—in how they would not make *taslīm* between every two units in the Tarāwīḥ or Tahajjud, because this is opposite to the Sunnah. The scholars have determined that the one who stands for three units in Tarāwīḥ or Tahajjud is like the one who stands for three units in Fajr, meaning his *ṣalāh* is nullified. If Allāh wills, at the end of the book we will mention an answer by Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azīz bin Bāz رحمه الله,

أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى بأصحابه ليالٍ، ولما كانت الثالثة أو الرابعة لَمْ يَخْرُجْ إِلَيْهِمْ، فَلَمَّا أَصْبَحَ قَالَ: لَمْ يَمْنَعْنِي مِنَ الْخُرُوجِ إِلَيْكُمْ إِلا أَنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ تُفْرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ.

The Prophet ﷺ led his Companions in prayer (Tarāwīḥ) for several nights, then on the third or fourth night he did not come out to them. When morning came, he said, "Nothing prevented me from coming out to you except the fact that I feared it would be made obligatory for you."[2]

That was in Ramaḍān, and his Companions performed it after him. And his *ummah* took this with acceptance.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَامَ مَعَ الإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كُتِبَ لَهُ قِيَامُ لَيْلَةٍ.

Whoever stands in prayer with the *imām* until he leaves will be written among those who prayed the night prayer.[3]

And he ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا, غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during Ramaḍān, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[4]

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refuting these people and clarifying their mistake.

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1129; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 761

[3] Collected by at-Tirmidhi (806); also narrated by Abū Dāwūd (1375), an-Nasā'i (1605), and Ibn Mājah (1327).

[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1031

So it is an established Sunnah that is not befitting for the Muslim to leave off.

As for the number of units of prayer, then nothing has been confirmed about it from the Prophet ﷺ, and the command for it is broad.

Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah ﵀ said:

"It is allowed to pray 20 units, as is well-known from the *madhhab* of Aḥmad and ash-Shāfi'i, and it is allowed to pray 36 units as in the *madhhab* of Mālik, and it is allowed to pray 11 or 13 units, and each is good. The increase and decrease in the number of units of prayer is according to how much the standing is lengthened or shortened.

"And 'Umar ﵁, when he gathered the people behind Ubayy, prayed 20 units with them, and the Companions ﵃ had those who did less and those who did more. And there have not been any set limits defined in the legislation, so many of the *imāms*—meaning, *imāms* of the *masjid*—pray a prayer that cannot be understood nor can one become still in either the bowing or prostrating positions, and becoming still and tranquil is a pillar of the prayer. The purpose of the *ṣalāh* is the presence of the heart while standing in front of Allāh the Most High and being admonished with the words of Allāh when they are recited. This does not happen in a forced haste. Praying 10 units of *ṣalāh* with long recitation and tranquility is more befitting than 20 units in forced haste, because the core of the *ṣalāh* and its essence is turning the heart to Allāh the Exalted. And how often does a little action bring about a lot of benefit!

"Likewise, a slow recitation is more virtuous than a quick one. Quick recitation that is permissible is that which has no letter dropped from it, because if any letters are dropped due to haste, it is not rewarded and it is prohibited. As for when one recites with a clear recitation that the praying people behind him benefit from, then this is good.

"And Allāh has blamed the ones who recite the Qur'ān without understanding its meaning, as Allāh the Most High said:

﴿ وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ ﴾

And there are among them unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:78]

"This means that they have recital without understanding. The intent behind sending down the Qur'ān is comprehension of its meaning and acting upon it, not just reciting it."

And some of the *imāms* of the *masjid* don't pray Tarāwīḥ upon what is legislated, because they are hasty in their recitation with a haste that offends the recital of the Qur'ān in an authentic manner. They do not become tranquil in their standing, bowing, or prostration, while tranquility is a pillar of the *ṣalāh*, and they observe the smallest number of units. So they combine between decreasing the number, lightening the *ṣalāh*, and spoiling the recitation, and this is playing games with worship.[5]

So it is obligatory on them to fear Allāh, pray their prayer well, and to not prevent themselves and those behind them from performing Tarāwīḥ in the legislated manner.[6]

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[5] And some of them let their voices leave the *masjid* with the usage of microphones, so they distract the *masājid* around them, and this is not permissible. Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said, "Whoever recites the Qur'ān while the people are praying voluntary prayers, then it is not for him to recite loudly, distracting them with it. The Prophet ﷺ left his Companions while they were praying in the *masjid*, saying, 'O people, all of you will meet your Lord, so do not let some of you recite loudly over others.'" *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (23, 61, 62, 63, 64).

[6] And some of the *imāms* of the *masjid* rush their recitation and prolong the prayer in order to finish the Qur'ān in the beginning of the last 10 nights or during them. Then when they finish the Qur'ān, they leave the *masjid* and travel to make 'Umrah, and they leave in their place people who are perhaps not suited to lead the prayer. This is a huge mistake and a big shortcoming, and it is neglect of what was entrusted to them in leading the people in prayer until the end of the month. Performing this is obligatory upon him and 'Umrah is recommended, so how does he leave off what is obligatory in order

May Allāh give success to everything in it of rectification and welfare. And may peace and salutations be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

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to do a recommended act? Surely, remaining in his *masjid* and completing his work is more virtuous for him than ʻUmrah. And when some of them finish the Qur'ān, they lighten up their *ṣalāh* and shorten their recitation in the remaining nights of the month, which are the nights of liberation from the Fire. It is as if these people think that the purpose of Tarāwīḥ and Tahajjud is finishing the Qur'ān, and not enlivening these blessed nights with standing in prayer, emulating the Prophet ﷺ, or seeking their benefits. And this is ignorance by them and playing games with worship, and we hope Allāh will return them to the truth.

THE TWENTIETH LESSON

Hasten to Learn the Qur'ān & Its Recital, Especially in This Blessed Month

All praise is due to Allāh, the Owner of virtue and perfection, who bestowed on us blessings we cannot count, the greatest of which is the blessing of the Qur'ān. And may Allāh give salutations to our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and to his family, Companions, and whoever follows them upon the path of faith, and upon him be peace, abundant peace.

As for what follows:

O slaves of Allāh, fear Allāh the Most High and thank Him, because he has favored you with the blessing of faith and distinguished you by the revelation of the Qur'ān, because it is a tremendous recital, a wise remembrance, and a straight path. It is the speech of Allāh which no speech resembles and which no falsehood comes to, from before it or behind it; a revelation from the All-Wise, the All-Praiseworthy.

Allāh has taken it upon Himself to preserve it, so neither removal nor addition can reach it; it is written in the Preserved Tablet, and in the *maṣāḥif*, protected in the chests, recited by tongues, and made easy to learn and reflect upon.

﴿ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴾

And We have indeed made the Qur'ān easy to understand and remember, then are there any that will remember?

[Sūrah al-Qamar 54:17]

It is possible for the little ones and the foreigners to memorize it and know it by heart. Tongues do not get tired of reciting it and ears do not get bored by its sweetness and delight. The scholars never grow tired of reflecting on it and seeking to understand its meanings, and neither human being nor *jinn* can come with even the shortest chapter like it, because it is an eternal miracle and a lasting argument. Allāh ordered its recitation and reflection and made it blessed, as He the Most High has said:

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾

(This is) a Book (the Qur'ān) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses, and that men of understanding may remember.

[Sūrah Ṣād 38:29]

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

من قرأ حرفا من كتاب الله فله حسنة والحسنة بعشر أمثالها، لا أقول الم حرف، ولكن ألف حرف، ولام حرف، وميم حرف.

He who recites one letter from the Book of Allāh will have a good deed, and the good deed is multiplied 10 times its like; and I do not say that *alif, lām, mīm* is one letter. Rather, *alif* is a letter, *lām* is a

letter, and *mīm* is a letter.[1]

And Allāh has given distinction and special virtue to the ones who carry the Qur'ān and act by it, above the rest of the people. The Prophet ﷺ said:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ.

The best of you is the one who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it.[2]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ كَالأُتْرُجَّةِ طَعْمُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَرِيحُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَالَّذِي لاَ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ كَالتَّمْرَةِ طَعْمُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَلاَ رِيحَ لَهَا، وَمَثَلُ الْفَاجِرِ الَّذِي يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ كَمَثَلِ الرَّيْحَانَةِ رِيحُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَطَعْمُهَا مُرٌّ، وَمَثَلُ الْفَاجِرِ الَّذِي لاَ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ كَمَثَلِ الْحَنْظَلَةِ طَعْمُهَا مُرٌّ وَلاَ رِيحَ لَهَا.

The example of him (a believer) who recites the Qur'ān is like that of a citron, which tastes good and smells good. And he (a believer) who does not recite the Qur'ān is like a date, which is good in taste but has no smell. And the example of a dissolute wicked person who recites the Qur'ān is like the *rayḥānah* (sweet basil), which smells good but tastes bitter. And the example of a dissolute wicked person who does not recite the Qur'ān is like the colocynth, which tastes bitter and has no smell.[3]

And in these texts is an urging towards learning the Qur'ān firstly, then reciting it and reflecting on it secondly, then acting upon it thirdly. Yet the people have divided concerning the Qur'ān into several types: from them is he who recites it with the full rights of its recital and gives importance to studying it in both knowledge and action, and these are the contented ones who are the people of the Qur'ān in truth. And from them is he who turns away from it and doesn't learn it or pay attention to it, and these are the ones Allāh has threatened with the most severe threat, as Allāh the Most High stated:

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[1] Reported by at-Tirmidhi (2915), and at-Tirmidhi said: "This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb*."

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 5027

[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 5020

﴿ وَمَن يَعْشُ عَن ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ
لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴾

And whosoever turns away from the remembrance of the Most Beneficent (Allāh), We appoint for him a devil to be an intimate companion to him.

[Sūrah az-Zukhruf 43:36]

And Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ ﴿١٢٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَىٰ وَقَدْ
كُنتُ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٥﴾ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيتَهَا ۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ
الْيَوْمَ تُنسَىٰ ﴿١٢٦﴾ ﴾

But whosoever turns away from My reminder, verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection. He will say, "O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)?" (Allāh) will say, "Like this, Our signs came unto you, but you disregarded them, and so this Day, you will be neglected."

[Sūrah Ṭā-Hā 20:124-126]

For verily, turning away from reciting the Qur'ān and risking forgetting it is a copious loss, a cause for the Shayṭān to overpower the slave, and a cause of hardness in the heart.

And from the people is he who recites the Qur'ān without any contemplation or consideration. This person doesn't gain much benefit from its recital. Allāh has blamed the one who limits himself to reciting without understanding, as He the Exalted said about the Jews:

﴿ وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ ﴾

And there are among them unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:78]

This means that they read it while reciting without understanding it. So it is obligatory on the Muslim, when he recites the Qur'ān, that his heart be present to understand it as much as he can, and not to suffice himself by quoting it and completing it without understanding it or being moved by it.

May Allāh give success to all in that which He loves and is pleased with. And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad.

THE TWENTY-FIRST LESSON

Zakāh & Its Rulings

This is appropriate to mention because many of the people are accustomed to paying their *zakāh* of wealth *(zakāh al-māl)* during the month of Ramaḍān due to the virtue of this time period. We ask Allāh that He accept it for us and for them. And this is if the completion of the year (the year in which the *zakāh* has remained at the minimum level) coincides with the month of Ramaḍān; but if the year is complete before the month of Ramaḍān, then it is obligatory to pay the *zakāh* when the *zakāh* has reached the period of one year, and it is not permissible to delay it until the month of Ramaḍān.

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists; He has made a portion of the wealth from the wealthy a right that should be given to the poor and needy, and to bring a benefit to the religion and the worldly affairs. And may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgment.

As to what follows:

Know that *zakāh* is the third pillar of Islām, and it is the companion of the prayer as it relates to the other pillars; and it is mentioned alongside the prayer in many verses in the Qur'ān, to the extent that Allāh mentioned *zakāh* alongside the prayer in about 30 verses. This proves the importance of *zakāh* and the great status it has.

Paying the *zakāh* has tremendous benefits; the greatest of them is thanking Allāh and obeying His command by spending that which He has given you. Those who give charity will obtain the noble promise of the reward for those that give from their wealth. From the benefits of paying the *zakāh* is the concern that the wealthy have for their brothers who are needy, so they fulfill their needs and guard them from not having what is sufficient.

And from the benefits is the purification of the one who pays the *zakāh* from stinginess, miserliness, and blameworthy character, and it will place him in the ranks of those who do good deeds, those whom Allāh loves and the people love. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾

Take *ṣadaqah* (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allāh for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of security for them, and Allāh is All-Hearer, All-Knower.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:103]

And Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَأَحْسِنُوا ۛ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

And do good; verily, Allāh loves those who do good.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:195]

And from the benefits of paying *zakāh* is that it is a reason for an increase in wealth and receiving blessings in the wealth. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَمَا أَنفَقْتُم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴾

And whatsoever you spend of anything (in Allāh's cause), He will replace it. And He is the best provider.

[Sūrah Saba' 34:39]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ أَنْفِقْ أُنْفِقْ عَلَيْكَ.

Allāh the Blessed and Exalted said, "O son of Ādam, spend, and I (Allāh) will spend on you."[1]

And refusing to pay the *zakāh* is cause for great harm. From the harms is being prevented from the benefits that come with paying the *zakāh*. And from the harms of not paying *zakāh* is that it will expose the wealth to harm and destruction, as it comes in the *ḥadīth* of 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها:

مَا خَالَطَتِ الزَّكَاةُ مَالاً قَطُّ إِلَّا أَفْسَدَتْهُ.

***Zakāh* has never been mixed with wealth except that it corrupts it.**[2]

And you see and hear today the effects that disasters have had upon wealth, from fire, sinking, looting, and bankruptcy, and the effects that the pests have upon the crops, and the different types of losses that are apparent and hidden; this is a punishment for not paying the *zakāh*.

And from (the disasters that occur) is that the rain stops falling from the sky, this rain that provides life for people and animals and grows the trees and crops. As it appears in the narration:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 993

[2] Collected by al-Bayhaqi (159/4)

ما منع قوم زكاة أموالهم إلا منعوا القطر من السماء.

No people have refused to pay the *zakāh* of wealth except that the rain has been prevented from falling from the sky.[3]

And this is what you have witnessed, when the rain stops falling in many of the countries and the tremendous harm that this causes, and this is a punishment in this life, and the punishment in the next life is more severe than this. Allāh the Exalted said:

> ﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي
> سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا
> فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ ۖ
> هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾
>
> **And those who hoard gold and silver [the money, the *zakāh* of which has not been paid], and spend it not in the way of Allāh, announce unto them a painful torment. On the Day when it (money, gold and silver, etc., the *zakāh* of which has not been paid) will be heated in the Fire of Hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, (and it will be said unto them): "This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard."**
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> *[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:34-35]*

And every wealth that *zakāh* is not paid upon is treasure that its owner will be punished with on the Day of Judgment. This is made clear in the authentic narration from the Messenger of Allāh in which he said:

ما من صاحب ذهب، ولا فضة، لا يؤدي منها حقها إلا إذا كان يوم القيامة صفحت له صفائح من نار، فأحمي عليها في نار جهنم فيكوى

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[3] Classed as *ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (5204).

بها جنبه، وجبينه، وظهره، كلما بردت أعيدت له في يوم كان مقداره خمسين ألف سنة، حتى يقضى بين العباد فيرى سبيله، إما إلى الجنة، وإما إلى النار.

There is no one who owns gold and silver and then does not give its right (pay *zakāh* on it) except that sheets of fire will be flattened for him and the sheets shall be heated with the Fire of Hell, and the person shall be on his sides and his back, and every time the sheets begin to cool, they will be reheated, and this will occur on a day that is fifty-thousand years long, and he will remain in this state until the people are judged, and then he will see his destination to either the Fire or Paradise.[4]

And Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ
هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ۖ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا بِهِ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ﴾

> **And let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which Allāh has given them of His grace, think that it is good for them; nay, it will be worse for them. Soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks like a twisted collar, on the Day of Judgment.**
>
> *[Sūrah Āli ʻImrān 3:180]*

And this has been made clear by a narration from the Prophet, who said:

إِنَّ الَّذِي لاَ يُؤَدِّي زَكَاةَ مَالِهِ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مَالُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ شُجَاعًا أَقْرَعَ لَهُ زَبِيبَتَانِ - قَالَ - فَيَلْتَزِمُهُ أَوْ يُطَوِّقُهُ - قَالَ - يَقُولُ أَنَا كَنْزُكَ أَنَا كَنْزُكَ.

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[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 987

The one who does not pay *zakāh* on his wealth, his wealth will appear to him on the Day of Resurrection like a bald-headed[5] viper (meaning, an enormous snake that is terrifying) with two dots above its eyes. It will hold on to him or encircle him and say, "I am your hoarded treasure, I am your hoarded treasure."[6]

This is the punishment in the next life for the one who refuses to pay the *zakāh*; this has been made clear by Allāh's Messenger. This wealth that is not purified shall be made into sheets and heated in the Fire, and then the person will be branded on their sides and their back; and it will also be turned into a tremendous viper that shall circle the person's neck, seize them with its fangs, and sting the person with a large amount of poison that will cause damage to the body.

And this is not a punishment that will occur for an hour and then stop; rather, this is a punishment that will last for fifty-thousand years. We seek refuge in Allāh from that.

And if it is known that a person is refusing to pay *zakāh,* they cannot be left alone; rather, they should be scorned and advised. And if they continue to refuse to pay, the leader should examine his situation. If he denies the obligation of paying the *zakāh,* he should be told to repent, and if he repents and pays *zakāh* (then this is good). But if he refuses, then he should be executed as an apostate from Islām. And if he acknowledges the obligation of paying *zakāh* but he is miserly, it becomes an obligation to take his wealth by force; and if it is not possible to take his wealth except by fighting him, then he should be fought, just as the Companions fought behind Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq against those who refused to pay the *zakāh* after the death of the Messenger of Allāh, until they were subjugated to pay it and abide by its ruling.

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[5] **Translator's Note**: Abū Dāwūd said, "*Aqra'* means a snake whose hair of the head was removed on account of poison." *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 5139, authenticated by Shaykh al-Albāni.

[6] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1403

And all praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. And may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE TWENTY-SECOND LESSON

Clarifying What is Obligatory to Pay for Zakāh

All praises belong to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and upon his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgment.

As to what follows:

Know, O slaves of Allāh, the wealth on which *zakāh* is obligatory is of four types; we will speak about two of those types.

The first type is the two types of currency. This type is gold and silver, and that which takes its place from the paper money that the people use today, whether it is called *dirham* or *riyāl* or *dīnār* or dollars, or any other name that it is called. So whoever has the *niṣāb* of gold or silver[1] or that which is equal to the *niṣāb* or more than it in paper money, and it is in his possession for an entire year, then it becomes obligatory for him to pay *zakāh* upon it.

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[1] The *niṣāb* of silver is 56 *riyāl* according to the rate in Saudi Arabia, and the *niṣāb* for gold is 10 pounds and three-sevenths of the pound, or the Saudi equivalent of these amounts in paper money which reaches its value.

And the amount to be paid is 2.5%, meaning 2.5 *riyāl* from every 100. And it is the same if he is saving this money for business, for savings to spend, for marriage, to buy a home, to buy a car, or for any other need. And it is the same whether or not this money belongs to an old person, a young person, or an insane person. Therefore, the *zakāh* is obligatory upon the wealth of the orphan and the young; their guardian will extract the amount on their behalf.

The profits of the *dirham* are the same as the year for the original amount. The new money is counted along with the money that has been saved from the entire year; thus, *zakāh* is paid upon the excess along with the principle wealth, even if the excess was only possessed for a short amount of time.

For the employee who stores a portion of his salary each month, it is safer and easier for him to select a month—such as the month of Ramaḍān—as the time to pay *zakāh* on what he has collected from cash. He pays *zakāh* on the money that he has possessed for the entire year and that which he has not had for the entire year.

As for those who are owed money by the people:

If the debt is with people who are able to repay it when it is requested from them, then the person pays *zakāh* on it when its year is completed from the time of the contract, whether he has received the money from them or not. He pays *zakāh* upon it just like he pays it for money that is in his hand.

If the debtor has difficulty repaying the debt and the person does not know if he will collect the debt or forfeit it, then he pays *zakāh* on it when he collects it after its year has passed. And this is according to the most correct opinion.

If a person has debt he owes to others and he has cash, the most correct statement of the scholars is that the debt does not prevent the obligation of *zakāh* on the money he has. Thus, he pays *zakāh* on the cash he has.

The second [type of wealth on which *zakāh* is due] is the merchandise presented for selling from which the person expects a profit, such as fabrics, cars, machinery, spare parts, land, and buildings for sale; the contents of groceries such as foods, drinks, and canned food; the contents of the pharmacies of medicines; construction tools of all kinds; and commercial libraries of books and other items.

When its year is complete or the price which you bought it at is appraised at the estimated value equal to that when the year has passed, whether that value is more or less than when you bought it—without considering the price you paid for it—then you pay one-quarter of one-tenth (i.e., 2.5%) of the estimated value. And do not leave anything you have prepared to sell, whether it is big or small, without estimating its value, by taking inventory of everything you have to pay *zakāh* on. There is no *zakāh* paid on buildings prepared for renting, cars, shops, tools, and other rented items. There is no *zakāh* on these items; the *zakāh* is only paid on the profit received from them when its year passes.

There is no *zakāh* paid on items the person is going to utilize, such as a house or a store; meaning, the place he sits to conduct buying and selling and the car he drives, and other items he uses. The person who has a factory or a metal workshop or an auto repair shop, or who has a printing press, there is no *zakāh* paid on the mechanisms that he uses to work; rather, *zakāh* is only paid on the items produced in this factory, workshop, or printing press. So he pays one-quarter of one-tenth (i.e., 2.5%) after its year has passed on the items produced.

The shares the person has in companies, whether investment firms or factories, transport companies, power companies, or cement companies, this *zakāh* is due in yields if the shareholder received yields on his shares in the company. As for the stock which the person has in commercial land, it is obligatory to pay *zakāh* on its shares, and its year is complete by paying 2.5%.

Know, may Allāh have mercy upon you, that it is a must to have the correct intention when paying *zakāh*, because *zakāh* is worship. And worship is not correct without intention, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى.

The deeds are only according to the intentions, and everyone shall have what they intended.[2]

Thus, the person makes his intention to pay *zakāh*. If someone gives a *dirham* for *zakāh* without the intention and then later on makes his intention, the money he gave will not count as *zakāh*. And the Muslim must precisely calculate the wealth he possesses so that no wealth remains on which *zakāh* was due that he did not pay *zakāh* on. It is permissible for the person to entrust someone to calculate his wealth and pay *zakāh* on it in his place. The person must willingly give *zakāh* without reminders of generosity and without hating doing so. Allāh the Exalted said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُم بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَىٰ ﴾

O you who believe! Do not render in vain your *ṣadaqah* (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:264]

Allāh the Exalted said concerning the hypocrites:

﴿ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَارِهُونَ ﴾

They came not to the prayer except in a lazy state; and they offer contributions unwillingly.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:54]

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1907

It is recommended to make *du'ā'* while paying *zakāh*. The person says:

اللهم اجعلها مغنما ولا تجعلها مغرما.

O Allāh! Make it a gain and do not make it a loss.[3]

The person who receives it says:

آجرك الله فيما أعطيت وبارك لك فيما أبقيت، وجعله لك طهورا.

May Allāh reward you for what you have given, bless you in what remains with you, and make it a purification for you.

Thus, fear Allāh, O slaves of Allāh, concerning the affairs of your religion, and specifically, the *zakāh* upon your wealth.

O slaves of Allāh, it is upon the people to give a lot of optional charity also during this noble month and great season. This is based upon the *ḥadīth* of Anas:

سئل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: أي الصدقة أفضل؟ فقال: صدقة في رمضان.

The Prophet ﷺ was asked, "Which charity is best?" He said, "Charity during Ramaḍān."[4]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

من تصدق بعدل تمرة من كسب طيب، ولا يصعد إلى الله إلا الطيب، فإن الله يقبلها بيمينه يربيها لصاحبها حتى تكون مثل الجبل العظيم.

Whoever gives charity equal to a date from good *(ḥalāl)* earnings—for Allāh does not accept anything but that which is good—Allāh will take it in His right Hand and tend it for the one who gave it

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[3] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 1797

[4] *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 663

as any one of you tends his foal, until it becomes like a mountain.[5]

Narrated from Anas (from a narration connected to the Prophet ﷺ), who said:

إن الصدقة لتطفئ غضب الرب، وتدفع ميتة السوء.

Indeed, charity extinguishes the Lord's anger and it protects against the evil death.[6]

The verses of Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* with this meaning are numerous and well known. Giving charity in this month is following the example of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. He would multiply his generosity more than normal during this month.

We ask Allāh to grant us and you success in what He loves and is pleased with, and to shower us with His pardon, forgiveness, and mercy. And may the salutations of Allāh and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions collectively.

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[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1014

[6] *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 664 (*ḥasan gharīb*)

THE TWENTY-THIRD LESSON

Concerning the Rulings of Zakāh

All praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists. For Him is the praise in the Hereafter and this life. He enriches (some) and He makes (others) poor. He has promised the one who gives, fears Allāh, and believes in *al-ḥusnā* (the best reward) that He will make smooth for him the path of ease. And he has threatened the one who is miserly, withholds, and denies *al-ḥusnā* that He will smooth for him the path of hardship. May Allāh bestow blessings upon Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions, who exerted themselves and their wealth in the path of Allāh and grasped onto Islām with the trustworthy handhold; and may abundant peace be upon them.

To proceed:

Fear Allāh the Exalted and know that whatever you give from *zakāh* and other than it from charity with pure intentions and from lawful earnings, then it is a good loan that you have given to your Lord, and you will find it accumulated for you, doubled and multiplied many times over. It is the long-lasting surplus, the beneficial stock and the good profits, along with what Allāh will facilitate for you in this world from the increase of your wealth, supplementing it with the blessings therein.

So do not regard the amount of *zakāh* that you pay as a burden, for some of the people who are endowed with millions consider its *zakāh* to be too much. They do not look at the bounty of Allāh upon them, when He has endowed them with these millions; and He is able to take it away from them and transform them into being poor and destitute in the twinkling of an eye, or seize them while they are in the prime of their life (with death) so that they leave it (their wealth) behind for others, so that it will be for them a liability, and for others it will be a benefit.

Then know that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى has specified payment venues for the *zakāh*, and it is not permissible to pay it in other than them nor will one be rewarded for it. He, the Exalted, has said:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا
وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

Aṣ-ṣadaqāt (here it means _zakāh_) are only for the poor, the needy, and those employed to collect (the funds), and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islām), and to free the captives, and for those in debt, and for those striving in the cause of Allāh, and for the wayfarer (a traveler who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allāh. And Allāh is All-Knower, All-Wise.

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:60]

So whoever has what suffices him and is sufficient from surplus for the period of a year, or he has income from salaries or other than it which suffices him, then he is (considered) rich, and giving the *zakāh* to him is not permissible nor will one be rewarded for paying *zakāh* to him, nor is it permissible for him to accept it.

Likewise, whoever has the ability to earn what will suffice him and the opportunities (to earn are available for him), then giving the *zakāh* to him is not permissible nor will one be rewarded for paying the *zakāh* to him, and it is not permissible for him to accept it.

So it is not permissible for the one paying *zakāh* to pay his *zakāh* except to one who he actually believes is from the people to whom *zakāh* is paid. For there has come in the *ḥadīth* that the *zakāh* is not permissible for the rich or for the strong one who has the ability to earn.[1]

Likewise, it is not permissible to distribute the *zakāh* in the "projects of goodness," such as the construction of *masājid*, schools, and the likes. These projects are only to be sponsored from the Bayt al-Māl (Public Finance Department) or from contributions, for the *zakāh* is a right of Allāh. He legislated it for these specific venues. And it is not permissible to allow it to be paid to one who has no right to it, nor for one to retain it for himself for his own worldly benefit, nor to spend the *zakāh* in that which is harmful, nor to save his wealth by it, so that he makes it a trade for a right that is obligatory upon him to be given to someone; nor is it permissible for him to withhold *zakāh* from him (the one who has a right to it). Nor is it permissible to pay it to one's ascendants, descendants, wife, or someone from those upon whom he is (already) required to spend.

So fear Allāh, O slaves of Allāh, and let the payment of *zakāh* and its distribution and the rest of your acts of worship be in accordance with what the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ dictate.

And know, O slaves of Allāh, that whoever does not distribute *zakāh* in its legislated venues that Allāh has stipulated for it in His Book, then verily it does not benefit him nor does it free him of the duty upon him of paying it. Because Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is the One who has set these venues Himself. He said:

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[1] Reported by Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā'i.

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا
وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

***Aṣ-ṣadaqāt* (here it means *zakāh*) are only for the poor, the needy, and those employed to collect (the funds), and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islām), and to free the captives, and for those in debt, and for those striving in the cause of Allāh, and for the wayfarer (a traveler who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allāh. And Allāh is All-Knower, All-Wise.**

[Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:60]

This is an expression that denotes restriction; it restricts the ruling to what was mentioned and negates it from what is besides it. If one were to distribute it in one venue from amongst these eight venues, that would suffice him, and he is not required to distribute it to the rest. The proof is that the Prophet ﷺ said to Muʿādh ؓ when he sent him to Yemen:

فأعلمهم أن الله افترض عليهم صدقة تؤخذ من أغنيائهم، وترد على فقرائهم.

So teach them that Allāh has obligated upon them the charity taken from their rich to be given to their poor.[2]

Since he stopped at mentioning the poor therein, this proves the permissibility of limiting its payment to the poor and the fact that it is sufficient.

And all praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of all that exists, and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1458; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 19

THE TWENTY-FOURTH LESSON

Incitement Upon Increasing in Striving to Do Righteous Deeds in the Last 10 Nights of Ramaḍān

All praise is due to Allāh, Who has favored the month of Ramaḍān over all other months. He has specified the last 10 nights with an enormity of rewards. He has incited (the slaves) upon particularizing the last 10 nights by increasing one's striving in worship, because they are the conclusion of the month, and actions are based upon their conclusions. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, his Companions, and whoever follows him in goodness until the Day of Recompense.

To proceed:

O Muslims, verily, you are in 10 blessed days, and they are the last 10 days from the month of Ramaḍān. Allāh has made them a season for manumission from the Fire. The Prophet ﷺ used to specify these 10 days by striving in action more than in other than them, as it comes in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* on the authority of ʻĀ'ishah ﵂:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَجْتَهِدُ فِي الْعَشْرِ الأَوَاخِرِ مَا لاَ يَجْتَهِدُ فِي غَيْرِهِ.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to exert himself in devotion during the last 10 nights to a greater extent than at any other time.[1]

And ʿĀ'ishah رضي الله عنها said:

كان إذا دخل العشر الأواخر أحيا الليل وأيقظ أهله وشد المئزر.

When the last 10 days of Ramaḍān came, he would stay up at night and would wake his family up, and he would abstain from marital relations.[2]

And she said:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ، وَأَحْيَا لَيْلَهُ، وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ.

With the start of the last 10 days of Ramaḍān, the Prophet ﷺ used to tighten his waist belt and spend his night in prayer, and he used to wake his family.[3]

This includes striving in reading, prayer, *dhikr*, charity, and other than that. And he ﷺ would devote himself, in these 10 days, to those actions. So it is proper for you, O Muslim, to follow the example of your Prophet, so that you free yourself from worldly work or decrease from it to spend an abundance of time busying yourself with obedience in these 10 blessed days.

From the particularizations of these last 10 days is striving on the Night of Decree and lengthening the prayer with extensive standing, bowing, and prostration, long recitation, and waking one's family and children so they may share with the Muslims in observing this ritual, partaking in the reward and being cultivated upon worship. Many of the people have been heedless concerning their children, so they have left them to wander the streets. They spend the nights in play and foolishness, and they do not respect these nights nor do they, within themselves, give it its (due) station. This is from the evil of the *tarbiyah* (their upbringing). Indeed, it is from the clear deprivation and the evident loss that these nights come and go while many of the people are in a state of heedlessness, turning away. They are not concerned with them nor do they benefit from them. They spend the entire night or most of it in that which contains no benefit or in that which has limited benefit which is possible for them to attain in another time. They take these nights away from what they have been specified for, so when the time comes for standing (in prayer), they sleep and they miss out on an abundant good.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1175

[2] *Sunan an-Nasā'i* 1639

[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2024

Perhaps they will not be able to attain it in another year. And they have placed upon themselves, their families, and their children heavy burdens and have not given thought to their ill effects. Perhaps some of them may say, "This standing is supererogatory and preserving the obligatory (prayers) suffices me."

The Mother of the Believers, ʿĀ'ishah ﵂, has set an example for these individuals: "It has reached me concerning a people that they say, 'Verily, we perform the obligatory; we have no concern for increasing upon it.' Surely, Allāh will not ask them except about what He has obligated upon them. However, they are a people who commit sins by night and by day. You are not except from your Prophet, and your Prophet is not except from you. And by Allāh, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ did not abandon the night prayer."

And from the particularizations of these blessed 10 days is that within them it is hoped that one may catch the Night of Qadr, concerning which Allāh has said:

﴿ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴾

The Night of Qadr (decree) is better than a thousand months.

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:3]

In the *Ṣaḥīḥayn,* it is reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ﵁ from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during the Night of Decree, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[4]

The Muslim does not attain this great night except when he stands all of the nights of the month, not specifying certain nights from them. This is from the wisdom of Allāh, Glorified be He, so that the slaves strive abundantly in seeking it and stand the nights of the entire month seeking it, so that they attain an abundance of action and an abundance of reward. So strive, may Allāh have mercy upon you, in these 10 days which are the conclusion of the month.

And they are nights of manumission from the Fire. It has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he said concerning the month of Ramaḍān: "A month whose beginning is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its end is manumission from the Fire." So the Muslim is the one for whom the season of mercy, forgiveness, and manumission from the Fire passes in this month while he has exerted his efforts, preserved his time, and sought the pleasure of his Lord. Verily, it is expected that this Muslim will attain every good of this month and its blessings, and that he will succeed in acquiring its rewards. So he reaches the highest levels with what he has sent forth in the days of idleness.

This obligates that attention be drawn to the fact that some of the *imāms* of the *masājid*, may Allāh guide them, oppose the Sunnah and the guidance of the Salaf when the Sunnah is to increase in striving within these 10 days by making the Tarāwīḥ prayer to be two parts. So he should pray 10 *raka'āt* at the beginning of the night and 10 *raka'āt* as Tahajjud at the end of the night and conclude it with the Witr. However, some of the *imāms* in this time do away with the prayer at the beginning of the night, and they stop short at

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[4] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 2024

Tahajjud prayer with 10 *raka'āt* or 8 *raka'āt*. Or they do away with Tahajjud prayer and stop short at Tarāwīḥ prayer at the beginning of the night. The meaning of this is that they do not increase their striving as the Prophet ﷺ would increase his striving in these 10 nights and stay awake throughout their nights with extra prayers and lengthening them; and that which we have mentioned is in regard to the one who prays 20 *raka'āt* throughout the entire month (for the night prayer). As for one who prays 10 *raka'āt* at the beginning of the month, then he should add to it 10 more in the last 10 nights, making them as Tahajjud in the last part of the night.

The Shaykh and 'Allāmah Abū Baṭīn has a treatise refuting the likes of these, which you can find in *Ad-Darar as-Sunniyyah* (3/181-185). We will transmit it at the end of the book.

We ask Allāh for the *tawfīq*, acceptance, and pardon for falling short. All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all that exists. And may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH LESSON

Clarifying the Rulings of I'tikāf

All praise is due to Allāh alone, and may salutations be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, after whom there will be no prophet, and upon his family and Companions.

As for what follows:

Know that there is a great act of worship associated with fasting and with the last 10 nights, and it is the act of worship known as *i'tikāf*, which Allāh sealed the signs of fasting with when He the Exalted stated:

﴿ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ﴾

And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in *i'tikāf* in the *masjid*.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

Linguistically, *i'tikāf* means: Adhering to something and staying next to it.

The religious meaning is: Staying in the *masjid* for the worship of

Allāh, and it is also called "closeness." It is a Sunnah and an act pleasing to Allāh, by way of the Book, the Sunnah, and scholarly consensus, and it is from the religious laws of old. In it is a means of closeness to Allāh the Most High, by staying in one of His houses confining oneself to worship of Allāh, cutting off connections with the creation in order to connect with the Creator, emptying the heart of distractions from the remembrance of Allāh, freeing oneself for the worship of Allāh by contemplation, remembrance, recitation of the Qur'ān, prayer, supplication, repentance, and seeking forgiveness.

I'tikāf is considered a Sunnah for every time, but in Ramaḍān, the Prophet ﷺ would emphasize performing it and being steadfast on it. In the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, on the authority of 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها, she said:

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يعتكف العشر الأواخر من رمضان حتى توفاه الله.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would perform *i'tikāf* in the last 10 nights of Ramaḍān until Allāh took his soul.[1]

And also, because in the last 10 there is more hope of finding Laylatul-Qadr (the Night of Decree).

I'tikāf is a righteous action and an act of worship which is not correct except with conditions:

1) The intention, from his saying:

إنما الأعمل بالنيات.

Actions are only by the intentions.[2]

2) That it is performed in a *masjid;* this is taken from the statement of Allāh the Most High:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1172

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 1; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1907

﴿ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ﴾

And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in *i'tikāf* in the *masjid.*

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

So the one who is doing *i'tikāf* is described by his being in the *masjid*. If it was correct to perform it in another place, the prohibition of intercourse would not have been specified inside of it, because it is forbidden during *i'tikāf* without exception anyway. And because he used to perform *i'tikāf* in his *masjid*.

3) That the *masjid* in which one makes *i'tikāf* has the congregational *ṣalāh* established in it, from what was narrated by Abū Dāwūd on the authority of 'Ā'ishah:

ولا اعتكاف إلا في مسجد جماعة.

And there is no *i'tikāf* except in the *masjid* of the congregational *ṣalāh*.[3]

And this is because *i'tikāf* in a *masjid* where the congregational *ṣalāh* is not made would either lead to missing the congregational *ṣalāh* or to the person leaving frequently, possibly fearing that this is incompatible with *i'tikāf*. It is not permissible for the person devoted to *i'tikāf* to leave what he is devoted to except for what is necessary.

The Prophet wouldn't enter the house except for a human need, nor would he visit the sick or follow funerals except if he made that a condition at the beginning of his *i'tikāf*.

And it is forbidden for the one making *i'tikāf* to have intercourse with his wife, from the statement of Allāh:

﴿ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ﴾

And do not have sexual relations with them (your

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[3] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 2473

wives) while you are in *i'tikāf* in the *masjid.*

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:187]

Meaning, as long as he is making *i'tikāf.*

And it is recommended that he busy himself with the remembrance of Allāh in *ṣalāh*, recitation, and *dhikr*, and that he avoid what doesn't concern him, from his statement:

من حسن إسلام المرء تركه مالا يعنيه.

It is from the goodness of a person's Islām that he leaves that which doesn't concern him.[4]

He can speak with those who come to him, without speaking a lot, and there is no problem if he cleans and perfumes himself. And he can leave to do what he has to.

وَكَانَ لاَ يَدْخُلُ الْبَيْتَ إِلاَّ لِحَاجَةِ الإِنْسَانِ.

And he did not enter the house but for the human need (for relieving himself).[5]

Thus, he can leave to fulfill a need, to wash, to carry out a duty, and to get food and drink if no one brings them to him. This is the legislated *i'tikāf*, and these are some of its rulings.

And we ask Allāh, for us and for all of the Muslims, for success in gaining beneficial knowledge and righteous actions. Verily, He is Close, Responding.

And all praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation, and may the salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

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[4] Reported by at-Tirmidhi (2317), Ibn Mājah (3976), Aḥmad in his *Musnad* (201/1), al-Ḥākim in *At-Tārīkh* (237/2), and aṭ-Ṭabarāni in *Al-Awsaṭ* (2902), and in *Al-Kabīr* (138/3, 2886).

[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 297

THE TWENTY-SIXTH LESSON

Clarifying the Virtue of Laylatul-Qadr & Hastening to Strive in It

All praise is due to Allāh, who preferred the month of Ramaḍān over the other months and distinguished it with Laylatul-Qadr (the Night of Decree), which is better than a thousand months. And may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

As for what follows:

Allāh the Most High said:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ۝٣ فِيهَا
يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ۝٤ ﴾

We sent it (this Qur'ān) down on a blessed night. Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments.

[Sūrah ad-Dukhān 44:3-4]

And Allāh the Most High said:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ (١) وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ
(٢) لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ (٣) تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ (٤) سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ
مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ (٥) ﴾

Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down in the Night of Qadr (decree). And what will make you know what the Night of Qadr is? The Night of Qadr is better than a thousand months. The angels and the Spirit descend therein by permission of their Lord for every matter. Peace! (All that night, there is peace and goodness from Allāh to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn.

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:1-5]

And it is in the blessed month of Ramaḍān, from the statement of the Most High:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ﴾

The month of Ramaḍān [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for the people, and clear proofs of guidance and criterion.

[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]

And it is expected in the last 10 nights of it, from the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

تحروا ليلة القدر في العشر الأواخر من رمضان.

Seek Laylatul-Qadr in the last 10 nights of Ramaḍān.[1]

So it is befitting to strive in each of the 10 nights, seeking this night.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1169

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ.

Whoever stands in prayer during the Night of Qadr, having faith and seeking the reward, will be forgiven for his previous sins.[2]

The Most High has reported that it is better than a thousand months, and it is called the Night of Decree because all that is in the next year is decreed in it. As the Most High said:

﴿ فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ﴾

Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments.

[Sūrah ad-Dukhān 44:3]

It is the yearly decree, the specific decree; as for the general decree, then it came before the creation of the heavens and the earth by fifty-thousand years, as has been authenticated from those *aḥādīth*. It is said that it is called "the Night of Decree" to glorify its high standing and rank, and the meaning of the statement of the Most High:

﴿ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴾

The Night of Qadr is better than a thousand months.

[Sūrah al-Qadr 97:3]

This means that standing for prayer during this night and doing good deeds during it is better than doing deeds in a thousand months excluding this night. And seeking it in the odd nights of the last 10 is more certain, from the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

اطلبوها في العشر الأواخر في ثلاث يبقين أو سبع يبقين أو تسع يبقين.

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2024

Seek it in the last 10, when there are three left, or seven left, or nine left.[3]

And it was most expected to occur on the 27th night, due to sayings from many of the Companions that it is the 27th night, from them Ibn ʿAbbās, Abī bin Ka'b, and others. But the wisdom of keeping it hidden is so that the Muslims will strive in worship in all of the last 10 nights, like how the hour of al-Jumuʿah is hidden during the day of al-Jumuʿah so the Muslim will strive all day.

And it is preferred that the Muslim strives in increasing his *duʿā'* in it because *duʿā'* in it is preferred, and that he prays with what was reported from ʿĀ'ishah, who said:

يا رسول الله، إن وافقتها فبم أدعو؟ قال: قولي: اللهم إنك عفو تحب العفو فاعف عني.

"O Messenger of Allāh, if I reach it then what should I supplicate with?" He said, "With my statement: *Allāhumma innaka ʿafuwwun, tuḥibbul-ʿafwa, fa'fu ʿannī.*" (O Allāh, verily You are Ever-Pardoning, and You love to pardon, so pardon me.)[4]

So, O Muslims: Strive during this blessed night with *ṣalāh*, *duʿā'*, seeking forgiveness, and righteous deeds, for verily it is the opportunity of a lifetime, and opportunities don't last forever. And verily, Allāh the Exalted has reported that it is better than a thousand months. A thousand months is more than 80 years, which is a long life, so what if a person spent all of it in the worship of Allāh? Yet this one night, Laylatul-Qadr, is better than it, and this is a tremendous virtue. This night is always in Ramaḍān, and it is certainly in the last 10 nights. So if a Muslim strove in all of the nights of Ramaḍān, then he would certainly happen upon Laylatul-Qadr, and it is expected that he would receive its goodness.

Which virtue is greater than this virtue for the one to whom Allāh has given success? So desire, may Allāh have mercy on you, to seek this night, and strive with righteous actions in order to win its rewards, for verily the one who is deprived is he who is deprived of the reward. And the one whom the times of forgiveness pass by, and he is still laden with his sins due to being heedless, turning away, and not caring about them, then verily this one is deprived.

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri* 2021, and 2022 with a similar wording.

[4] Reported by at-Tirmidhi (3513) and Ibn Mājah (3850).

O you who have sinned, repent to your Lord and ask Him for forgiveness, for verily Allāh has opened the door of repentance. And He called you and made for you fixed times of goodness in which the rewards are multiplied and the evil deeds are wiped away, so take yourself to the means of salvation.

And all praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all creation, and may salutations and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH LESSON

Clarifying What is Legislated at the End of the Month

All praise is due to Allāh, by Whose grace righteous actions are completed. He has made for everything found in the *dunyā* an ending point and for every resident a time of departure, so that the people of *īmān* may consider that. So they embark upon actions (of worship) as long as they are in the time of respite, and they are not deceived by the lengthening of hopes. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions, the best of companions and people, bestowing abundant peace upon them.

To proceed:

O slaves of Allāh, reflect upon the quick passing of the nights and days and know that they diminish as they (the days and nights) and your lives pass; and the pages (upon which) your actions (are written) are folded. So embark upon making *tawbah* and doing righteous actions before the appropriate opportunity has gone.

O slaves of Allāh, just yesterday you were anticipating the blessed month of Ramaḍān and today you are bidding it farewell, it being a witness upon you as to what you have done. Ease is for the one for whom it has witnessed with Allāh that he has done good (therein); it is an intercessor for him for entrance into Paradise and manumission from the Fire. Distress is for the one for whom it has witnessed evil that he has done; it is a complainant against him to his Lord about his negligence therein, his squandering of it. So bid farewell to the month of Ramaḍān and the night prayers with the best of endings, for indeed the actions are (judged) by their endings.

So whoever has been a *muḥsin* (good doer) in this month, then it is upon him to complete it (in the best way). And whoever has conducted himself evilly therein, then it is upon him to make *tawbah* (sincere repentance) and perform righteous actions in that which remains from the days thereof. Perhaps Ramaḍān will not return for him after this year. So finish it with goodness and persevere in continuing the righteous actions that you performed therein for the rest of the months. Verily, the Lord of the months is One, and He watches over you and is a witness (to all that you do). He has commanded you with His obedience throughout your (entire) life; he who worships the month of Ramaḍān, then the month of Ramaḍān has ended and gone away.

Whoever worships Allāh, then verily He is Alive and will never die. So continue in His worship at all times. Indeed, some of the people feign worship specifically in the month of Ramaḍān, so they safeguard the prayers therein in the *masājid*, they recite the Qur'ān frequently, and they give an abundance of charity from their wealth; then, when Ramaḍān ends, they become lazy regarding acts of obedience. Perhaps they abandon the Jumu'ah and the congregational prayers, thus destroying what they have built.

They nullify what they have ratified, and it is as if they assume that their striving in Ramaḍān erases what issues from them during the year from atrocities, destructive sins, abandonment of the obligations, and commission of the prohibited actions. They do not know that the expiation of (sins by way of) Ramaḍān and other than it is restricted by avoidance of the major destructive sins. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ
وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴾

If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall remit from you your (small) sins, and admit you to a noble entrance (i.e., Paradise).

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:31]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

الصلوات الخمس والجمعة إلى الجمعة ورمضان إلى رمضان كفارة لما بينهن إذا اجتنبت الكبائر.

The five prayers, one Jumu'ah to the next Jumu'ah, and Ramaḍān to the next Ramaḍān, are (all) an expiation for what occurs between them (of sins) if the major sins are avoided.[1]

Which major sin, with the exception of *shirk*, is greater than the squandering of the prayer? Its squandering has become a customary practice with some of the people. The striving of these individuals within Ramaḍān will not benefit them at all with Allāh if they follow it with disobedience by abandoning the obligations and performing the prohibited acts.

Someone from the Salaf was asked about a people who strive hard in the month of Ramaḍān, but when it ends, they squander (their actions) and commit evil acts, so he said: "These are an evil people. They do not know Allāh except in Ramaḍān; yes, for the one who knows Allāh fears Him in every time."

Some of the people perhaps fast in Ramaḍān, pray therein, manifest goodness, and abandon disobedience, but they do not do this out of *īmān* (faith) or seeking the reward from Allāh. They have only done that from the perspective of civility and conformity with the society, because they consider this to be from following the societal norms. This is from *an-nifāq al-akbar* (major hypocrisy), for the hypocrites used to display to the people that which was apparent amongst them from acts of worship.

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 16/233

This one considers the month of Ramaḍān to be a temporal prison for which he waits to end so that he may pounce upon acts of disobedience and prohibited things. He rejoices with the ending of Ramaḍān so that he may be released from its prison.

Ibn Khuzaymah has narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Abū Hurayrah ﵁ from Allāh's Messenger ﷺ:

أظلكم شهركم هذا بمحلوف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ما مر بالمسلمين شهر خير لهم منه، ولا مر بالمنافقين شهر شر لهم منه، بمحلوف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، إن الله ليكتب أجره ونوافله قبل أن يدخله ويكتب وزره وشقاءه قبل أن يدخله، وذلك أن المؤمن يُعد فيه القوت والنفقة لعبادة الله، ويعد فيه المنافق اتباع غفلات المؤمنين واتباع عوراتهم فغنم يغنمه المؤمن.

This month of yours has shaded you by the oath of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. There has not passed upon the Muslims a month that is better for them than it. Nor has there passed upon the hypocrites a month that is more evil for them than it. By the oath of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, verily Allāh will write its reward and supererogatory actions before he even enters it. And he writes his sins and atrocities before he even enters it. That is because the believer prepares therein with his time and spends it in the worship of Allāh. The hypocrite prepares therein for following the transgressors and following their desires. So the spoils are given to the believer.[2]

The believer rejoices in the completion of the month because he has utilized it in acts of worship and obedience. He hopes for its reward and bounties. The hypocrite rejoices in the completion of the month so that he may embark upon actions of disobedience and (fulfillment of) desires from which he was imprisoned during Ramaḍān. Due to that, the believer follows up the month of Ramaḍān with seeking forgiveness, magnification of Allāh, and worship, while the hypocrite follows it with disobedience, entertainment, and parties of singing, musical instruments, and drums, happy that it has departed. So fear Allāh, O slaves of Allāh, and bid farewell to your month with *tawbah* (true repentance) and seeking forgiveness.

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[2] Ibn Khuzaymah recorded it in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (1884). Also, Aḥmad in *Al-Musnad* (2/524), al-Bayhaqi in *As-Sunan al-Kubrā* (4/304), and in *Shu'ab al-Īmān* (7/214-215, *ḥadīth* 3335).

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LESSON

Clarifying What is Legislated at the End of the Month

All praise is due to Allāh, Who has blessed us with the completion of the month of fasting and has granted whom He wills *tawfiq* therein to take advantage of what it contains of immense goodness. May Allāh bestow prayers and abundant peace upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his righteous, noble Companions.

O slaves of Allāh, fear Allāh in the remainder of the nights and days;, for verily He is Ever-Watching and is not heedless, Ever-Sustaining and does not sleep.

O slaves of Allāh, from that which Allāh has legislated for you at the end of this blessed month is the Eid prayer in gratitude to Allāh the Exalted for (enabling you to) perform the obligatory fasting, just as He has legislated for you the prayer of Eid al-Aḍḥā in gratitude to Him (for enabling) the performance of the Ḥajj. So they are the two Eids of the people of Islām. It has been authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ that when he entered Madīnah, its people had two days wherein they would play. He ﷺ said:

قد أبدلكم الله بهما خيرا منهما: يوم النحر ويوم الفطر.

Allāh has replaced them with that which is better than them: Yawm an-Naḥr and Yawm al-Fiṭr.[1]

So it is not permissible to add to these two days by inventing other holidays, such as birthdays or national and tribal holidays. Those are the holidays of *al-jāhiliyyah* (ignorance), whether they are called *'īd*, commemorations, days, weeks, or years (i.e., the Day of Such-and-Such, So-and-So Week, the Year of Such-and-Such). The Eid in Islām is called an *'īd* because it returns and is repeated every year with elation and joy with what Allāh has facilitated of worship by the fasting and the Ḥajj, which are two pillars from the pillars of Islām.

Also, because Allāh, Glorified be He, has returned therein upon His servants goodness and manumission from the Fire. The Prophet ﷺ has commanded the common folk to go out for the Eid prayer, even the women. So it is legislated for the women to attend it unperfumed and without wearing adorned and decorated clothing, and without free-mixing with the men. The menstruating woman is to go out to attend the invitation of the Muslims, but she is to stay away from the prayer area. Umm 'Aṭiyyah رضي الله عنها said, "We were commanded to go out on the day of Eid to the point that the virgin girl would leave her domicile and the menstruating woman would even go out; so they would be behind the women. They would magnify (Allāh) with their (the men's) *takbīr* and supplicate with their (the men's) supplication, hoping for the good of that day and its purity."

Going out for the Eid prayer is a demonstration of the symbols of Islām and a sign from its manifest signs. So be diligent upon attending it, may Allāh have mercy upon you, for verily it is from those things which complete the rulings of this blessed month. And be diligent upon having humility, lowering the gaze, and not wearing one's garment below the ankles. (Likewise) upon guarding the tongue from vain speech, cursing, and false statements, and guarding one's hearing from listening to "he said, she said," songs, musical wind instruments, stringed instruments, and attending the parties of storytelling, entertainment, and play which some of the ignorant people establish.

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[1] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 1134

Verily, obedience is to be followed by obedience, not its opposite. Due to this, the Prophet ﷺ commanded his *ummah* to follow the fast of the month of Ramaḍān by fasting six days from the month of Shawwāl. Imām Muslim has narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

من صام رمضان وأتبعه بست من شوال فكأنما صام الدهر.

Whoever fasted Ramaḍān and followed it up with six days from the month of Shawwāl, then it is as if he fasted for (an entire) year.[2]

This means [a year] in reward, blessing, and it being multiplied (for the slave), because the good deed is worth 10 times its like. So Ramaḍān is like 10 months of fasting and the six days from Shawwāl is like two months. These are the months of the year, and it is as if the Muslim has fasted all of them if he fasted Ramaḍān and followed it with fasting six days of Shawwāl. So be diligent, may Allāh be merciful to you, upon fasting these six days so that you may attain by them the enormous reward.

And may Allāh bestow prayers and peace upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1164

THE TWENTY-NINTH LESSON

Clarifying the Rulings of Ṣadaqah al-Fiṭr

All praise is due to Allāh Who has, by His Grace, completed the righteous actions. May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, the first to precede in goodness, and upon his family, Companions, and all those who cling to his Sunnah until the Day of Recompense.

Know that Allāh has made *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr* the conclusion of the fast. We praise Allāh for *tawfīq* in completing (the fast) and we ask Him to accept it and to make us from those manumitted from the Fire at the end.

O Muslims, Allāh has legislated for you at the end of this great month acts of worship that increase you in nearness to Allāh. So He has legislated for you *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr* as purification for the fasting person from vain evil speech and sin. Allāh's Messenger ﷺ has obligated it upon the child, the elder, the male, the female, the free person, and the slave. It is purification for the body, nourishment for the poor, and a consolation for the indigent. The Muslim gives on behalf of himself and those who are his dependents, such as his wife, children, and the rest of those upon whom he is required to spend. It is recommended that one give it on behalf of the child in the womb (of the wife).

The place of its payment is the land that one is in at the completion of the month.[1] If there are those on whose behalf he is required to pay in a land other than the land he is in, then he pays their *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr* along with his own in that land; and it is permissible for him to have them pay it on his and their behalf in their land.

The time for payment begins at the setting of the sun on the night of Eid and continues until the Eid prayer. It is permissible to hasten (its payment) a day or two before Eid. But to delay its payment until the morning of Eid is better. If one postpones its payment until after the Eid prayer without an excuse, then he pays it in the later part of the day. If he does not pay it on the day of Eid, then he is required to make up its payment after that day. By that, it is clear that it is a must that one pay *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr* regarding the one who is able to do so.

The time of payment is divided into:

1) A permissible time; and it is that which is a day or two days before Eid.

2) A preferred time; and it is that which is between the setting of the sun on the night of Eid up until the Eid prayer.

3) A sufficient time; and it is that which is after the Eid prayer up until the end of the day.

4) A time in which one is making up for missed payment while having incurred the sin (of being delinquent in payment); and it is after the day of Eid.

The one who is entitled to *zakāh al-fiṭr* is the same one who is entitled to *zakāh al-māl* (*zakāh* paid upon one's wealth), from the indigent, the poor, and their likes. So one pays it to those who are entitled to it in the time for payment, or he pays it to the one appointed over his or her affairs. It is not sufficient to give it to an individual who is not appointed over the affairs of the one entitled to it.

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[1] It is not permissible to transfer it to another land as long as there are in one's land those who are entitled to it. So if there are none in one's land who are entitled to it, then he can send it to the poor people of the land closest to him. The poor people of the land are those who are residents therein or they have come to it from another country.

The amount given as *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr* is a *ṣā'* of wheat, barley, dates, raisins, or cheese. Or it can be whatever takes the place of these things from that which is grown in the land, such as rice, corn, millet, and everything which is grown in the land. And the measure of a *ṣā'* by the kilo is approximately three kilos.[2]

It is not sufficient to pay the monetary price instead of food, because this is in opposition to the text.[3] Currency was, in fact, present during the time of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ, so if it was sufficient then, he would have clarified that to his *ummah*. And whoever issues a *fatwā* saying that one may pay the price (monetarily), he has issued a *fatwā* based upon *ijtihād* from himself, and *ijtihād* can either be incorrect or correct. Paying the monetary price is in opposition to the Sunnah and it has not been transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ or from any of the Companions that they paid the monetary price for *zakāh al-fiṭr*.

Aḥmad said, "The monetary price is not to be given." It was said to him that a people say, "‘Umar bin ‘Abdul-‘Azīz used to take the monetary price." He said, "They toss the statement of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and say, ‘So-and-so said,’ while ‘Umar said, ‘Allāh's Messenger ﷺ obligated the payment of *zakāh al-fiṭr* with a *ṣā’*.’ "

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[2] **Translator's Note:** About 6.6 pounds.

[3] And it is not permissible to pay *dirhams* so that one buys food in another land, as some of the people do today, because this is in opposition to the Sunnah. A *fatwā* has been issued from a group of the senior scholars in forbiddance of that, and for Allāh is the praise. This is forbidden for a number of reasons:

1) It is payment of the price (which is not permissible).

2) It is payment of the *ṣadaqah al-fiṭr* outside of the land wherein the person has been fasting.

3) It advances the time of payment, because they pay money at an early time in the month so they can send it and it will arrive in the land they intend it for. This, we do not contend, is helping those in need in any of the lands of the Muslims. However, this is not to be done regarding the acts of worship which are restricted to a particular place, a particular manner, and a particular time, for these must be performed in accordance with these restrictions.

O Muslims, from that which Allāh has legislated for you at the end of this month is the *takbīr* (saying *Allāhu Akbar*—Allāh is the Greatest) from the setting of the sun on the night of Eid up until the Eid prayer. The Exalted has said:

﴿ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴾

> **He wants that you should complete the number of days and that you magnify Allāh (saying *Allāhu Akbar*) for having guided you so that you may be grateful.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:185]*

And from that which Allāh has legislated for you at the end of this month is the Eid prayer, and it is from the completion of the remembrance of Allāh عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Allāh the Exalted has said:

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّىٰ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

> **Indeed, whosoever purifies himself shall have success. And [who] remembers the name of his Lord and prays.**
>
> *[Sūrah al-A'lā 87:14-15]*

Some of the Salaf said: "What is intended here is *zakāh al-fiṭr* and the Eid prayer, and Allāh knows best." May prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions.

THE THIRTIETH LESSON

What is Obligatory Upon the Muslim After the Month of Ramaḍān

All praise is due to Allāh, the One Who measures that which is measured, the One Who accounts for the days and months. I praise Him for the vastness of His favors; He is Oft-Forgiving and Ever-Grateful. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped save Allāh, alone, Who is One without any associates. For Him is the dominion, for Him is the praise, and He is able to do all things. I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger, the conveyor of glad tidings, the warner and radiant lamp. May prayers and abundant peace be upon him, his family, and his Companions until the Day of Gathering.

To proceed:

O Muslims, fear Allāh the Exalted and reflect upon the quickness of the passing days and nights, and remember by that the nearness of your transition from this *dunyā* so that it may increase you in righteous actions. The blessed month of Ramaḍān has opened for you its goodness and blessings and you have lived throughout its entire time, then it has ended and swiftly returned as a witness with its Lord for he who has recognized its status and benefited from its goodness by acts of obedience; and as a witness against he who is ignorant of its virtue and has behaved sinfully therein by squandering (the time). So let everyone from amongst us call himself to account as to what he has sent forth in this month. He who has sent forth good therein, then let him praise Allāh for that and let him ask Him for acceptance and continuation upon acts of obedience in his future life. Whoever was nullifying his fast therein (by sins or the likes), then let him repent to Allāh and begin his life anew, utilizing it in obedience instead of the life that he has wasted in heedlessness and sin. Perhaps Allāh will expiate from him that which has passed and give him *tawfīq* in that which remains from his life. He, the Exalted, has said:

﴿ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ
الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ ﴾

And perform *aṣ-ṣalāh* at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds. That is a reminder for the mindful.

[Sūrah Hūd 11:114]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

وأتبع الحسنة السيئة تمحها.

And follow up the bad deed with a good deed; it will erase it.[1]

He, the Exalted, has said:

﴿ إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ
اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴾

Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for those, Allāh will change their

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[1] *Jāmi' at-Tirmidhi* 1987

sins into good deeds, and Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

[Sūrah al-Furqān 25:70]

O slaves of Allāh, verily the month of Ramaḍān is as Allāh's Messenger ﷺ has described it:

شهر أوله رحمة وأوسطه مغفرة وآخره عتق من النار.

A month whose beginning is mercy, its middle is forgiveness, and its end is manumission from the Fire.

That is because the people have different situations in respect to this month. So from them is he upon whom this month came while he was upright upon obedience. He safeguarded the prayer in congregation; he stayed away from disobedience, then he strove in this month with actions of obedience, so it was an addition in goodness for him. This one will attain the mercy of Allāh, because he is a *muḥsin* in his actions. He, the Exalted, has said:

﴿ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

Verily the mercy of Allāh is ever near to the *muḥsinūn* (good-doers).

[Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:56]

From them is he upon whom the month comes, so he fasts its days and stands (in prayer) as much as is easy for him from its nights. Before that, he was constant in performing the obligatory acts and many acts of obedience. However, he had with him some sins less than the major sins. So this one will attain the forgiveness of Allāh. He, the Exalted, has said:

﴿ إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ
وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴾

If you avoid the major sins which are forbidden for

you, then We will expiate for you (minor) sins and enter you into a noble entrance.

[Sūrah an-Nisā' 4:31]

And the Prophet ﷺ said:

الصلوات الخمس والجمعة إلى الجمعة ورمضان إلى رمضان كفارة لما بينهن إذا اجتنبت الكبائر.

The five prayers, Jumu'ah to the next Jumu'ah and Ramaḍān to the next Ramaḍān, are expiation for what is between them (of sin) if one avoids the major sins.[2]

From them is he upon whom the month comes while he has major sins; however, they are less than *shirk*. He is bound by them to enter the Fire, then he repents from them, fasts this month, and stands (in prayer) as much as is easy for him. So this one attains manumission from the Fire after he was supposed to enter it.

And from them is he upon whom the month comes while he is firm upon disobedience, from the commission of forbidden acts, abandoning the obligations, and squandering the prayer. So he does not change his state nor does he repent to Allāh from his sins; or he repents from them with a temporary repentance in the month of Ramaḍān, and when it has ended, he returns to it (the disobedience). So this one is the loser who has lost his life and he has wasted his time. He has not gained from this month except sins and misdeeds.

Jibrīl said to the Prophet, may peace descend upon them both: "And whoever the month of Ramaḍān reaches and he is not forgiven, then may Allāh be distant from him; say, *'Āmīn'*." The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Āmīn."* The deprived one is the one whom Allāh has deprived and the wretched one is the one from whom Allāh is distant. O slaves of Allāh, the worship of Allāh is obligatory in every time. It does not have an ending except at death. He, the Exalted, has said:

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[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 233

﴿ وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ ﴾

And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty (i.e., death).

[Sūrah al-Ḥijr 15:99]

And He, the Exalted has said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴾

O you who believe, fear Allāh as is His right and do not die except as Muslims.

[Sūrah Āli 'Imrān 3:102]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

إذا مات الإنسان انقطع عمله إلا من ثلاث.

When the person dies, his deeds are cut off except three…(to the end of the *ḥadīth*).[3]

Death is near, and for Allāh there are acts of worship that are performed in set times, weekly, daily, and yearly. From these acts of worship are those that are pillars of Islām, and from them are those that are a completion for it. The five prayers are performed every day and night, and they are the second pillars of Islām after the two testimonies. The Jumu'ah prayer is performed every week, and it is from the greatest symbols of Islām. The Muslims gather for it in one place out of reverence for it. The *zakāh* is the close companion of the *ṣalāh*, and it is not from those acts that are performed every year. As for the acts (that are yearly acts), then the *zakāh* is performed with its (the year's) completion. Fasting the month of Ramaḍān is obligatory every year. Making pilgrimage to the House of Allāh is obligatory upon the Muslim who is able (at least) once in his lifetime. Likewise, the 'Umrah and that which is in addition to the Ḥajj is supererogatory.

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[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 1631

Aside from these obligatory acts of worship, there are recommended acts of worship, such as the *nawāfil* (optional) prayers, *nawāfil* fasts, and *nawāfil* Ḥajj and 'Umrah. This is from that which demonstrates that the entire life of the Muslim is worship, either obligatory or recommended. So the one who thinks that worship is sought from him during the month of Ramaḍān and then he is pardoned from worship afterwards, he has assumed evilly and is ignorant of the right of Allāh upon him, and he does not know his religion. Rather, he does not know Allāh as He should be known, nor has he estimated Him with a rightful estimate since he has not obeyed Him except in Ramaḍān; and he has not feared Him except in Ramaḍān; and he has not hoped for His reward except in Ramaḍān. Verily, this individual has cut the ties with Allāh while he cannot dispense without Him even for the twinkling of an eye.

And the action—whatever it may be—if he has fallen short regarding the month of Ramaḍān, then it is an action that is rejected back to its doer, however much he may have exerted himself in it, because it is an action that is cut off, having no foundation or any branch. Only the people of *īmān* utilize the month of Ramaḍān, those upon *istiqāmah* (steadfastness) in every era. They know that the Lord of the months is One. He is, in every month, cognizant of the actions of His slaves and a witness (over them).

May Allāh bestow prayers and peace upon Muḥammad, his family, and his Companions altogether.